

GERBERUS



GANTZ WAITING ROOM
ENXAME

OFFTOPIA

[gantz_waitingroom &
mangascreener]

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special thanks for former work to Gatsu (Band of Hawks)



この世の終り への旅

西岡兄妹



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西岡兄妹

青林舎



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Nishioka bro. & Sis.



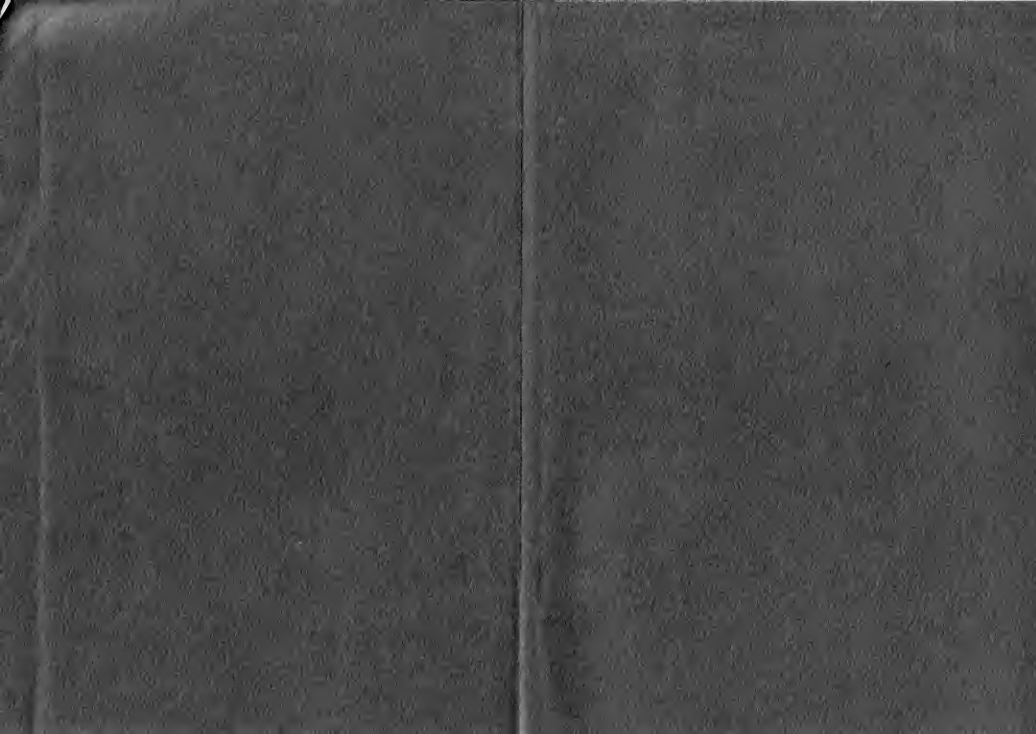
この世の終りへの旅

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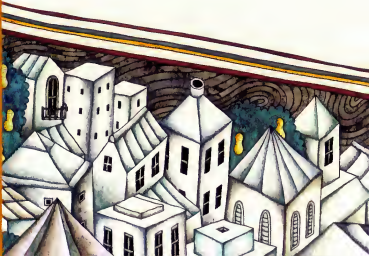
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(CHAPTER 9 - UNDESIRABLE RETURN,
UNWELCOME SURVIVAL 173

(CHAPTER 10 - THE END OF THE WORLD 193

EPILOGUE - THE END
THAT DOESN'T END 204



PROLOGUE - THE BEGINNING THAT DOESN'T BEGIN 5

(CHAPTER 1 - BOXER MARU 11

(CHAPTER 2 - THE RISE AND FALL OF THE PIRATE SHIP 27

(CHAPTER 3 - VILLAGE OF THE MAN-EATING INSECTS 43

(CHAPTER 4 - WHY WE STOPPED EATING HUMAN FLESH 75

(CHAPTER 5 - PARADISE LOST 97

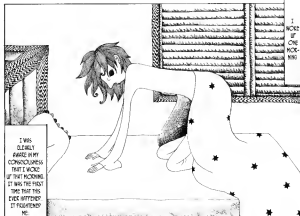
(CHAPTER 6 - THE BLIND ARAB 115

(CHAPTER 7 - THE CAMEL HOTEL 135

(CHAPTER 8 - THE GATEKEEPERS 149



PROLOGUE
...
**THE
BEGINNING
THAT
DOESN'T
BEGIN**



I WAS
DUMBLY
AWAKE IN MY
CONSCIOUSNESS
THAT I WOKED
UP THAT MORNING.
IT WAS THE FIRST
TIME THAT THIS
EYES WATTENED.
IT FRIGHTENED
ME.

I
WOKED
UP
ONE
MOR-
NING



I PROPER
TO GO
TO WORK.
I TRY TO
TIE MY
SHOELACES,
AND I
REALIZE
THAT I DON'T
KNOW HOW
TO TIE THEM
ANYMORE.

MY
EMOTIONS
AND MY
SHOELACES
BECOME ALL
TANGLED UP.





I CONTINUALLY
TAKE A STEP
FORWARD
MY LIFE
ISN'T
UNSAFE.

WHEN I
TURNED
BACK,
I SAW THE
MYSTIC
TALL
KNOWING AS
FREEDOM
STEPPED
OUT
BEFORE
MY EYES.

BOOK
LIVE.



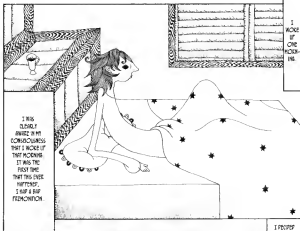
BOOK
LIVE.

CHAPTER 1

• • •

BOXER-MARU







I TURNED
AROUND TO
FIND THAT
THE STREET
THAT LEADS
TO THE
STATION HAD
RECKLESSLY
BEEN CUT
OUT INTO
MANY
DIFFERENT
ROUTES.



THE
STREET
WAS
CUT
OUT
INTO
MANY
DIFFERENT
ROUTES.



I HADN'T
ON FOR-
WARD.

THIS
STUCK
ME AS
OFF, BUT
UNHAPPY
BY ALL
THIS.
I HEADED
TO THE
STATION
AS USUAL.



...I
WAS
LOST.



HOW-
EVER
...





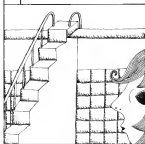
I WAS BORN OF
THAT I
ONLY EVER
WENT BACK
AND FORTH
BETWEEN
THE STATION
AND HOME -
I NEVER
BOREDOM
TO WALK
AROUND
TOWN.

SOME-
WHAT
FO-
TIGHT,
I WOULD
THROUGH
THE UN-
FAMILIAR
SCENERY.



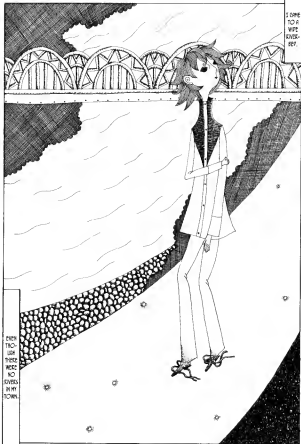
THIS
HARD
AND A
LITTLE
DIFFICULT.

I'M
NOT
HAPPY
ANY,
BUT I
KNOW
FOR
CERTAIN
THAT I
WOULD
NEVER
GO TO
WORK.



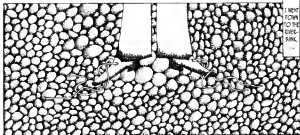
SOME-
WHAT
FO-
TIGHT,
I WOULD
THROUGH
THE UN-
FAMILIAR
SCENERY.

I DARE
TO A
WIFE
EVER-
REY.

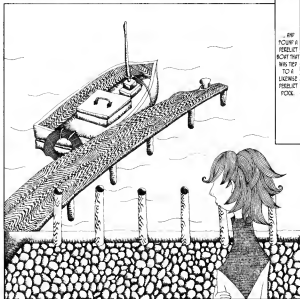


EVER
THO-
UGH
THERE
WERE
NO
EVERS
IN MY
TOWN.

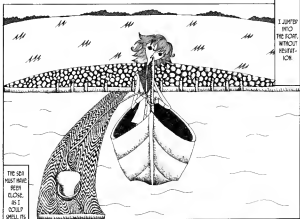




I WENT
DOWN TO THE
OVER-
BANK.



... BUT
FOUND A
PESKY
BOAT THAT
WAS TIED
TO A
LIKEWISE
PESKY
POLE.



I JUMPED
INTO
THE BOAT,
WITHOUT
HESITATION.

THE SEA
MUST HAVE
BEEN
CLOSE.
AS I
DROPPED
SHOULD ITS
SCENT...



IT WAS
ALL GOOD
AND WELL
THAT I SET
OUT MY
JOURNEY,
BUT THERE
WAS
NOTHING
TO MOVE
THE BOAT
FORWARD.

THE FIRST
WAS BROKEN,
THERE WERE
NO OARS AND
NEEDLESS
TO SAY,
THERE WAS
NO ENGINE
EITHER.

I SUDDENLY
BECAME
TERRIFIED
BY THE
FEEL OF
BEING
TAKEN
OUT
INTO
THE SEA.



THE BOAT
MOVES
FORWARD
SLOWLY,
PULSED
BY THE
WAVE
CURRENT.

BEING
SWIFT
BY THE
TIDES
AND
CURRENTS



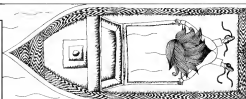
I WAS
SICK
OF
LIVING
LIKE
THIS.



SEEDING
A
LIP
AT
THE
CENTER
OF
THE
BOAT
I
OPENED
IT.



THIS PIP
STAKE ME
AS OFF, BUT I
CAME UP
WITH AN
EXCELLENT
IDEA.



I DIS-
COVERED
A
LARGE
HOLE.

... AND
MY
BOY-
CELS



... OFF.



I TOOK
MY
PANTS

... AND
PRO-
PEP
TO
CALL
THE
BOAT
"BOY-
CELS-
HAREU"

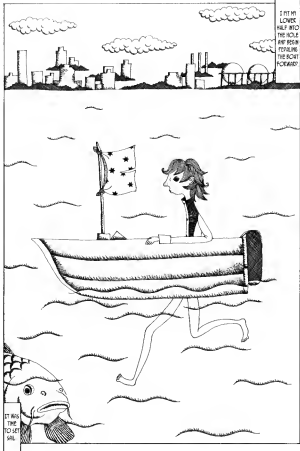


I TIEP MY
BOYCELS
TO THE
BROKEN
MAST ...

THIS
WAS
MY
EXCITED



NOTE: IN JAPAN, A BOY'S NAME IS ALMOST ALWAYS SUFFIXED WITH "HAREU".



I PUT MY
LOWER
HALF INTO
THE BOAT
AND BEGAN
PUSHING
THE BOAT
FORWARD.

IT WAS
TIME
TO SET
SAIL.

GOING
AGAINST
THE
CURRENT
SEEMED
LIKE A
NO-
BRAIN-
ER FOR
A THING TO
DO.



I FEEL
THE BOAT
AGAINST
THE CURRENT
I FELT THAT
WAS THE
FREEDOM
I SHOULD
GO.

BUT
THE
BOAT
REFUSED
TO
MOVE
FOR-
WARD.

IT WAS
THEN THAT
I REALIZED
THAT A MAN'S
LESSER GOALS
WERE FOR
PEOPLES
BOATS.
BUT I DID
NOT WANT
TO GIVE UP.



A
JOURNEY
THAT HAD
BEGUN
MUST BE
COM-
PLETED

I LEFT
ON
PEOPLES
BOAT.



HAY THEY
DIDN'T
SEND ME
ON MY WAY
TO KEEP
WATCHING
ON ME?
TO LAUGH
AT ME?



I SEE
TWO PEOPLE
STANDING
ON THE
EMBANKMENT.
I HAD
TEARFUL
WINGS CUP
THEIR
SILHOUETTES
TOGETHER.
BUT I
SOMEBODY
HAD THE
FEELING
THAT I
KNEW THEM.

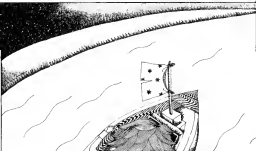


BUT THE
BOMB
WENT
LIGHT
MORE
FORWARD?



I KEPT
ON
PEEPING
THE.

I WAS
STUCK BY
HOW TIME
FLIES WHEN
YOU'RE
CONCENTRATING
ON SOMETHING.



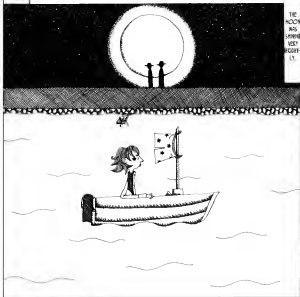
IT WAS
STARTING
TO GET
DARK.

THE
THOUGHT
DEPRESSING
ME...
BUT I
KEPT ON
FORGING
FORWARD
THEE-EIS



I IMAGINED
WHAT IT
WOULD BE
LIKE TO
SPEND THE
REST OF MY
LIFE HERE.
TRYING
FUTILELY
TO REPAIR
THE BOAT
FORWARD

THE
MOON
WAS
SHINING
VERY
BRIGHTLY.



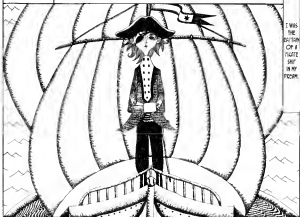


CHAPTER 2
• • •
THE RISE
AND FALL
OF THE
PIRATE SHIP



I WAS
IN A
DREAM

I WASN'T
QUITE SURE IF
I WAS ABOUT
TO SINK INTO
THE PUTTS
OF SLEEP,
OR INTO THE
PUTTS OF
THE SOIL.



I WAS
THE
DARTER
OF A
PIRATE
SHIP
IN MY
DREAM.



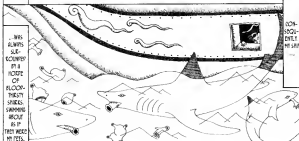
...AND WE WERE KNOWN FOR OUR DUTIFULNESS.

OUR MAIN AREAS OF ACTIVITY WERE THE SOUTH PACIFIC AND EAST CHINA SEAS. ...



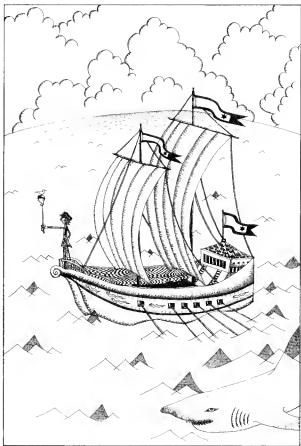
...WE WOULD LAUNCHED THE BOAT TO PIECES AND FEED THEM TO THE SHARKS.

AFTER TAKING THE LOOK.



...WAS ALWAYS SUB-COURTESY IN A HOUSE OF BLOOD-THIRSTY SHARKS. SWIMMING ABOUT AS IF THEY WERE MY PETS.

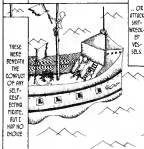
CON-SEQUENTLY, I WAS LATE





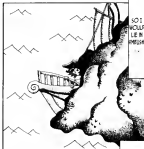
...BUT
IT WAS
SIMPLY
IMPOSSIBLE
FOR AN
ORCULATE
PIRATE SHIP
SUCH AS
HIS TO
CATCH UP
TO THEM

BUT
UNFORTUNATELY,
IMPROVED
ENGINE
TECHNOLOGY
ENABLES
SHIPS TO
SAIL AT
HIGHER
SPEED, ...



THESE
WERE
BENEATH
THE
COMFORT
OF ANY
SELF-
RESPECT-
ING PIRATE,
BUT I
HAD NO
CHOICE

... OR
ATTACK
SHIP-
WRECK-
ING
VESSELS

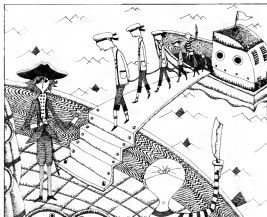


SO I
WOULD
LIE IN
WAIT...

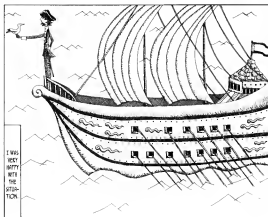


BUT THAT
TOO WAS
BENEATH
THE
COMFORT
OF A
PIRATE

YOU
MIGHT
WONDER
WHY I
DON'T
FOLLOW
SUIT AND
GOOF MY
SHIP WITH
AN ENGINE
AS WELL...

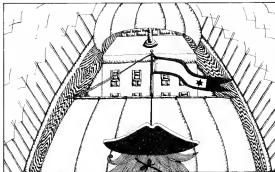


AND TO
PREVENT OF
SLAUGHTERING
THE DECK
OF THE SHIP
I ATTACKED
TO ENLARGE
THEM AS
BOWERS.

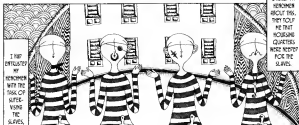


THE
INCREASED
MANOEUVER
ENABLED
MY SHIP
TO SAIL AT
A FASTER
SPEED.

I WAS
VERY
HAPPY
WITH
THE
SITUATION.



ONE DAY, I NOTICED THAT A FOSALINE SLEEPING BAG HAD BEEN CENTERED ON THE SHIP.



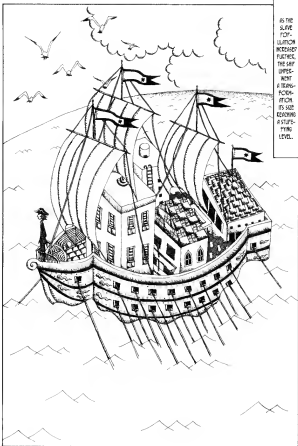
I WAS ENTRUSTED BY HEROMON WITH THE TASK OF SUPERVISING THE SLAVES.

I ASKED MY HEROMON ABOUT THIS. THEY TOLD ME THAT HOUSES AND QUARTERS WERE NEEDED FOR THE SLAVES.



—SO I DIDN'T TEST.

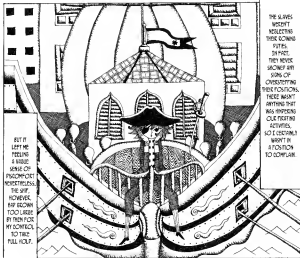
...AND THIS WAS SEEN LIKE A NECESSARY MEASURE WITH THE GROWING NUMBER OF SLAVES.



AS THE SLAVE POPULATION INCREASED FURTHER, THE SHIP WENT A TANG-POON-ATION, ITS SIZE REACHING A STUFF-ING LEVEL.

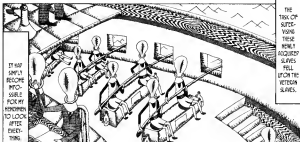


THE SLAVES
ATTACKED
OTHER
SHIPS AND
CAPTURED
MORE
SLAVES.



THE SLAVES
WEREN'T
REFLECTING
THEIR COMING
FUTURES.
IN FACT,
THEY NEVER
SAW ANY
SIGNS OF
OVERSTAYING
THEIR POSITIONS.
THERE WASN'T
ANYTHING THAT
WAS HAPPENING
OUT THERE
ACTIVELY,
SO I CERTAINLY
WASN'T IN
A POSITION
TO COMPLAIN.

BUT IT
LEFT ME
FEELING
A LITTLE
SENSE OF
FRUSTRATION
NONE THELESS.
THE SHIP,
HOWEVER,
WAS SO
BIG THAT
IT WASN'T
EVEN POSSIBLE
FOR ME
TO TAKE
FULL CONTROL.



IT WAS
SIMPLY
BECAUSE
INFO-
SABLE
POKE MY
HEADSHIN
TO LOOK
AFTER
EVERY-
THING.

THE
TASK OF
SUPER-
VISING
THESE
NEWLY
ACQUIRED
SLAVES
FELL
UPON THE
VETERAN
SLAVES.



A NEW-
COMING
BODY WAS
ESTABL-
ISHED.



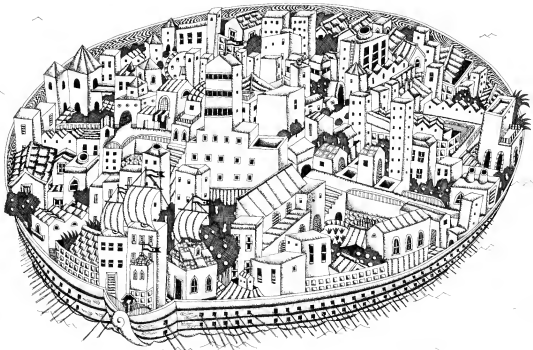
THEY
SEEMED
HAPPY.

WITH
NOTHING
LEFT TO DO,
MY HEADSHIN
SPENT THEIR
DAYS FONDLY
AND ENJOYING
IN PLEASANT.



SHOPS
WERE STARTED
AS WELL AS
CONFER-
ENCES, THOUGH I
HAD NO CLUE
WHAT THEY
WERE NEEDED
FOR.
EVERYWHERE
THERE WERE
BUILDINGS
BEING
CONSTRUCTED.

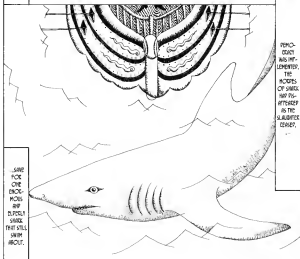
IT
WASNT
A SHIT
NOW
AS
MUCH
AS IT
WAS A
CITY.





I BOAT
SO SPEND
THE FIVE
PENDING
THREE WAS
NOTHING
ELSE FOR
ME TO
PO.

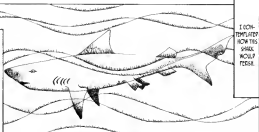
MY EXISTENCE
BECAME
FORGOTTEN.
FOOTLE NOW
ONLY SPOKE
OF ME AS IF
I WERE A
PIECE IN A
FAIRY TALE.



...SHE
FOR ONE
DROG-
MOW, AND
DUPERS
SHARK
THAT STILL
SWIM
ABOUT.

DRUG-
DROG WAS THE
LORDS OF THE
SHARKS.
THE
SHARKS
WAS THE
SLAUGHTER
HOUSE.

FISH POKE
STAY GROWING
THEY SIMPLY
GROW LARGER
AND LARGER AS
THEY AGE
THE MONTHS
AND YEARS
THEIR BODIES
ENLARGING
UNTIL
PEDESTAL
EYES WIDE



I CON-
TEMPLATED
HOW THIS
SHARK
WOULD
FEEL.



A STORM
HAD
POURED
TO PORT.

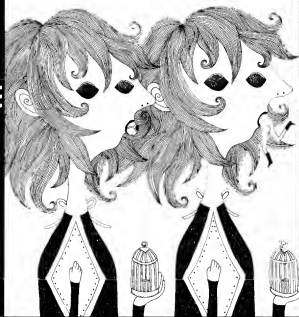


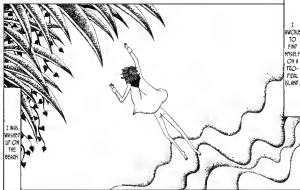
ONE DAY,
WHEN
THE SHIP
CEASED
BEING A
SHIP AND
BECAME
SOMETHING
ELSE
ENTIRELY,



...IT
SANK.

•
CHAPTER 3 • VILLAGE OF THE MAN-EATING INSECTS
•





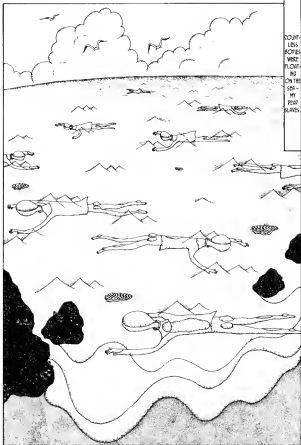
I WAS
WORRY
OF ON
THE
BEACH

I
WANT
TO
FIND
MYSELF
ON A
TROPICAL
ISLAND

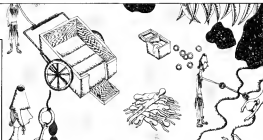


THE
RE-
MAINS
OF
BO-
YER-
HARD
WERE
STRAWN
ABOUT

COUNT-
LESS
POPPLES
WERE
FLOW-
ING
ON THE
SEA -
MY
PEAR
SLAVES.



— WERE METH-
CRAILLY
COLLECTING
UP THE
BOB-
LES.



THE
NATIVE
PEO-
PLE
OF THE
SLAVE
ATTACK
IN
CLOTH-
ING
I HAD
NEVER
SEEN
BE-
FORE.



BUT
UPON
CLOSER
INSPEC-
TION
THEY
APPEARED
TO BE
SIFTING
THROUGH
THEM TO
SELECT
THE
FRESHER-
LOOKING
ONES.



I
THOUGHT
FOR A
MO-
MENT
THAT
THEY
WERE
GOING
TO
BUY THE
BOB-
LES.

CRIM-
INALISM
IS STILL
PRACTICED
AT SOME
TROPICAL
ISLANDS.



THE
SLAVES
ARE
ABOUT
TO BE
ENTERED,
I THOUGHT.



I HAD
BEEN
PO-
OP-
ING.

I
IMME-
DIE-
ATELY
REAL-
IZED
THAT
I WAS
DEAD,
BUT
IT
WAS
TOO
LATE.



I
THOU-
GHT.

THEY'RE
GOING
TO
KILL
ME...



IT
SEEMED
THAT
HE
WAS
TELLING
ME
TO
PUT
IT
ON.

BUT
THE
MAN
WAS
POINTING
AT
BONES-
MAD'S
PLUG
AND
SAID
SOME-
THING.



HE
POUNCE
MY
SHOES
AND
BROUGHT
THEM
TO
ME



...HE
WIFE-
DEPT
TO BE
SAYING.

COME
WITH
US. ...



TRYING
MY BEST
TO STAVE
OFF THE
S POL-
LOWING
TRICK.

SEV-
ERAL
POWEE
BOOTS
WERE
LOW-
BY
ON TO
A CART
WHICH
WENT
THEY
EAD-
DEPT
WANT.



IT WAS
A LONG
TRIP.



I DON'T PERFECTLY
ENJOY IT, BUT WHERE
WOULD I
BE IN A
JUNGLE SUCH
AS THIS?
I WOULDN'T
MOST LIKELY
GET LOST
AND ENDED UP
BITTEN BY A
TERRIFIC
SNAKE.

THEY
WERE
UNEXPECTEDLY
KIND.

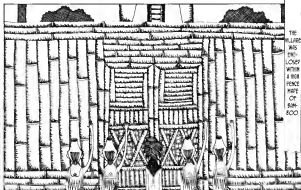


WHEN I
BEGAN
TO LAB
BORING,
THEY
ALLOWED
ME ON
THE DIET.



IT TOOK
US TWO
HOURS TO
FINALLY
GET TO
THE
VILLAGE.

BUT
SO I
REJOICED
IN THE
DIET.



THE VILLAGE WAS ENCLOSED WITH A ROBUST FENCE MADE OF BAMBOO.



A MAN ON A WATCH-TOWER LET OUT A SHRIEK.



THE GATE OPENED.



THE
VILLAGERS
BEGAN
TO
COME
OUT
OF
THEIR
HOUSES.

I WAS
TAKEN
TO THE
CENTER
OF A
LARGE
OPENING.



THE CROWD
IS CHANTING
ALONG TO
THE RHYTHM,
BEATING
THEIR THORNS.
I WAS
TERRIFIED,
AND FELT
CERTAIN
THAT THEY
INTENDED
TO EAT ME.

A FEW
MEN
WERE
WORKING
HARD
TO FORCE
ACROSS
ME DOLLY.



THE BLUES, HIS FACE FULL OF DEPRESSION, WELDED ME WITH A SMILE.

BUT IT SEEMED THAT THE PRINCE WAS MEANT TO WELCOME ME TO THE VILLAGE WHEN THE CELEBRATIONS WERE OVER, I WAS TAKEN TO THE VILLAGE BLUES'S HOUSE.



I AM ONLY ONE NOW WHO SPEAKS JAPANESE HE SAID.

HE MOVED TO ME IN JAPANESE IT SEEMED THAT HE HAD LEARNED IT FACING THE WAR.



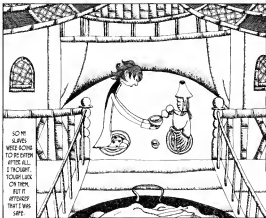
I WAS OFFERED TO A ROOM.

JAPANESE
PEOPLE
EAT THREE
OF MY
FAMILY.



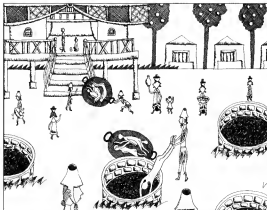
JAPANESE
OF MANY
ROBBLE
THING TO US
FUDING NINE.
HE CONTINUED.
THEY EAT
PEOPLE OF
THIS VILLAGE.

THIS TALK
OF EATING
PEOPLE WAS
MAKING ME
NERVOUS.



BUT YOU,
YOU BEING
SO RUDE
TO US,
YOU ARE
GOOD
PERSON.
YOU ARE
FOUR.

SO MY
SLAVES
WERE GOING
TO BE EATEN
AFTER ALL.
I THOUGHT.
TOUR LUCK
ON THEM.
BUT IT
APPEARED
THAT I WAS
SAFE.



I LOOKED
AND NOTICED
THAT THESE
WERE WELLS
THAT WERE
USED IN THE
OLDEN DAYS
WHICH
THE VILLAGERS
WERE USING
THE FEW
SLAVES.

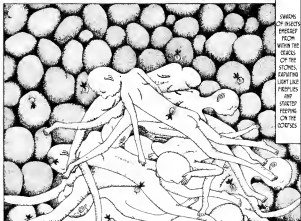


THE
VILLAGER
ELDER
SAID
AND
TOOK ME
TO ONE
OF THE
WELLS.

I ASKED
WHAT
THEY
WERE
DOING.



I FEEL
POOR.



SWARMS
OF INSECTS
EMERGED
FROM
WITHIN THE
CARCASSES
OF THE
STONES,
EMITTING
LIGHT LIKE
FIREFLIES
AND
STARTLED
FEEDING
ON THE
CORPSES



I
FLOODED
MINE
AND
THE
WELL.



THESE
ARE OUR
PEOPLE.
THE
VILLAGE
ELDER
SAYS.



...JUST
DOWN
ON
THESE
ROCKS
WAS
A
FIRE
OF
TERRI-
FICALLY
BIG,
LIKE
THOUSANDS
OF
CANDLES

...AND
SHE
WAS
REMARKABLY
CAPABLE
OF
A
FEW
TRICKS
SHE
COULD
DO
WHEN
SHE
WAS
ALONE



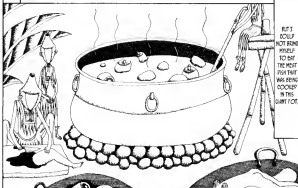
I KNOW
THE
LIGHT
FEELS
HEAT.



I ATE
PORK-
TOES.



I
FEARED.



BUT I
COULDN'T
NOT BEING
MYSELF
TO EAT
THE MOST
FISH THAT
WAS BEING
COOKED
IN THIS
DIRTY POT.

AND SO
I HAD TO
FEEL THE
PAIN THING.
I KNOW
I WAS
BEING
IMPOLITE.
I FELT
A SENSE
OF GUILT.



THE
BLUES' FIRST
WIFE
OFFERED
THE FISH
TO ME
MANY
TIMES.



THE
CLONES
BEGAN
TO
SING A
SONG



THAT THE
SONG WAS AN
IMPROVISED
TICK
LAMENTING
HI REFUSAL
TO ACCEPT
TICK
HOSPITALITY

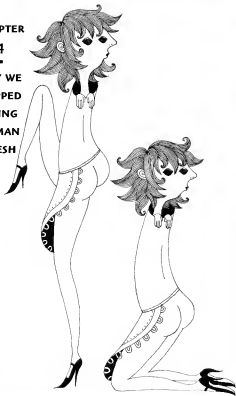
...AND
SOME-
THING
I FIG-
URED
OUT
LATER

CHAPTER

4

...

WHY WE
STOPPED
EATING
HUMAN
FLESH





I WAS
SITTING ON
A TREE ONE
NIGHT WITH
THE VILLAGE
ELDER
Gazing AT
THE SKIES.
HE OFTEN
DREAMED
HE SAW
WHEN HE
SLEPT
WHY HE
WAS FEELING
LONELY.



BECAUSE
YOU REFUSE
OUR
HOSPITALITY.

STARS
ALWAYS
BEAUTIFUL
BUT MY
HEART
NEVER SAW
HE SAW.



LITTLE BY LITTLE
THE
VILLAGE ELDER
IN BROKEN
JAPANESE
BEGAN TO
NARRATE
THE
LEGEND
PERPETUATING
THE
ISLAND'S
ORIGIN.

WHEN
SAT AND
DAIJI STILL
TOOK THEM
WHEN
PAINLESS
COVERED
WORLD.

... FATHER SAT
AND MOTHER DAIJI
WOULD MEET
TOMORROW AND
COPIULATE FROM
TIME TO TIME,
AND MANY OF
THE ENTITIES WE
KNOW TODAY
WERE ALREADY
IN EXISTENCE.
HOWEVER,
THESE ENTITIES
EXISTED MERELY
AS ABSTRACTIONS,
FLUTTERING ABOUT
IN THE NOTHINGNESS.
AND NEITHER
THE SUN NOR
THE MOON HAD
YET EXISTED.
ITSELF FROM
THE BEGINNING.

THE STORY
WENT
LIKE THIS.
IN ANCIENT
TIMES,
WHEN THE
SAT AND
DAIJI WERE
STILL ONE
AND THE
WORLD WAS
COVERED IN
PAINLESS.

MUMULO
AND MAMULO,
A PAIR OF
TWIN BROTHERS,
WERE THE
FIRST BODIES TO
COME INTO
THE WORLD.
THEIR ATTENDANTS
WERE THREE
OTTOWAYS OF
EACH ORICE,
AND NO ONE
OTHER WHOLE
OF THEM
WERE FIRST-
BORN.

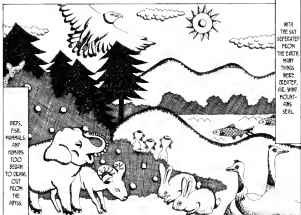


ONE PAIR
THE NEXT FIRST
GROUP OF
BROTHERS
WHO CAME
INTO EXISTENCE
- THE ELDER
EXPRESSED TO
THESE BODIES
AS BODIES -
ORDERED TO
SEPARATE
EARTH AND SKY
AND CREATE
THE WORLD
AS WE KNOW
IT.

...AND THEN
THE SUN WAS BORN
FROM BENEATH
MUMULO'S FEET,
EMITTING ITS RED
LIGHT UPON THE EARTH.
AS THE SUN SHINE AT
MAMULO'S FEET,
THE MOON WAS BORN
FROM THERE,
EMITTING ITS BLUE
LIGHT UPON THE EARTH.
THE ISLANDERS THIS
REFERS TO THE SUN
AS "MUMULO LAMSA"
(MUMULO'S SON),
AND TO THE MOON
AS "MAMULO LAMSA"
(MAMULO'S SON).
AND THE TWO BODIES
CONTINUE TO SAW CUT
THE SKY WITH THEIR
TOWERS, NOW
TOWNS.

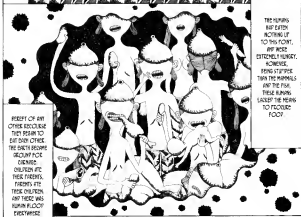


AND THE
TWO SAID:
WE SHALL
GET RID OF
PATRICE SKY
AND MOTRICE
EARTH.
MUMULO
STOOD AT
MOTRICE
EARTH'S HEAD
AND MAMULO
STOOD AT
PATRICE SKY'S
FEET
THEY LIFTED
UP PATRICE
SKY...



BECAUSE THE
FISH, BIRDS,
AND HUMANS
WERE
TOO
CLOSE
TO EACH
OTHER,
THEY
DIED.

WITH
THE SKY
SEPARATED
FROM
THE EARTH,
MANY
THINGS
WERE
CREATED.
AIR, FIRE,
MOUNTAINS,
SEA.



BECAUSE OF THE
DARKNESS
THEY
DIED.
THE
DARKNESS
BECAME
GROUND FOR
THE
CHILDREN
AND
THEIR
PARENTS.
THEY
DIED.
THE
DARKNESS
BECAME
GROUND FOR
THE
CHILDREN
AND
THEIR
PARENTS.
THEY
DIED.

THE HUMANS
HAD EATEN
NOTHING UP
TO THIS POINT.
THEY WERE
EXTREMELY HUNGRY.
HOWEVER,
BEING STUPID
THEY DID NOT
KNOW THAT
THEY HAD
TO EAT
THEY
DIED.

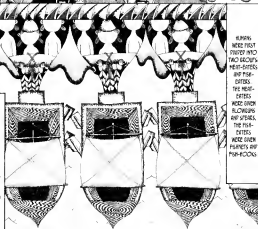
THEY
CONSIDERED
WITHIN OUR
THOSE
WIPED
OUT FROM THE
WORLD,
BUT BEING
NEEDFUL,
THEY RECOVER
INSTEAD TO
FLOCK
WITH OTHERS.

THE BOYS
WERE
SHOCKED
BY
SURVIVED
AT THE
TERRIBLE
SIGHT.

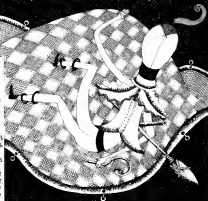


HUMANS
WERE FIRST
DIVIDED INTO
TWO GROUPS:
MEAT-EATERS
AND FISH-
EATERS.
THE MEAT-
EATERS
WENT OVER
HILLS
AND MOUNTAINS,
THE FISH-
EATERS
WENT OVER
FISH AND
FISH-BOATS.

BOATS
WERE BUILT
THE BOYS
WENT TO
SEEK THE
MEAT-EATERS
TO LARGE
ISLANDS,
WHERE THERE
WERE MANY
LARGE ANIMALS
TO HUNT.
AND THE
FISH-EATERS
TO SMALL
ISLANDS,
WHERE THERE
WERE MANY
FISH TO EAT.

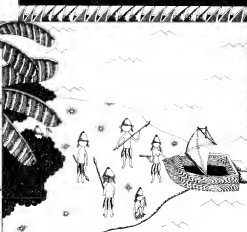


MALONI
SARSA SPED
INTO A FEW OF
THESE POINTS
AND REPLACES
THE BLOWHORN
AND SPEARS
WITH THE PADDLES
AND PIRN-KOOGS
AND VICE VERSA
THE OTHER BOYS
WERE SCAMP
PLAYING ON THAT
MOONLESS NIGHT
AND HIS PADDLES
WENT UNNOTICED.

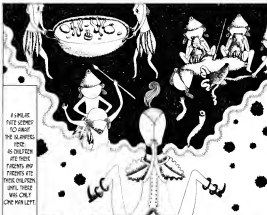


THE YOUNGEST
OF THE BOYS WAS
AN INCOMPARABLE
FEARLESS HANDY
MALONI SARSA,
WHICH TRANSLATES
TO "THIS BOY WON".
FRODOSS HAD
SWALLOWED THE
MOON THAT NIGHT.
A FEW HOURS
BEFORE THE
BOATS WERE
FINALLY TO SET
SAIL.

BOAT
WITH
NOTHING
BUT
BLOWHORN
AND
SPEARS.
THEY HAD
BEEN SENT
TO A
SMALL
ISLAND,
WHERE
THE ONLY
LAND-
FALLING
CREATURES
WERE
REPTILES
AND SMALL
MONKEYS.

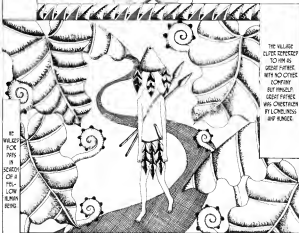


IT WAS
ON ONE
OF THESE
BOATS
THAT THE
VILLAGERS
SAILED TO
THIS ISLAND



A SIMPLE
WIFE SEEMED
TO BRING
THE SLAYERS
HOME
AS CHILDREN
ATE THERE
FATHERS AND
FATHERS ATE
THEIR CHILDREN
UNTIL THERE
WAS ONLY
ONE MAN LEFT.

CANNIBALISM
TOOK
HOLD AGAIN
THROUGHOUT
THE WORLD
WITH ONLY
MANY TRIPS.
MALOMA
SANGA WAS
ABUSED TO
NO END



HE
WALKED
FOR
PARTS
IN
SEARCH
OF A
FEL-
LOW
HUMAN
BEING

THE VILLAGE
CLIQUE DEPENDS
TO HIM AS
GREAT FATHER.
WITH NO OTHER
COMPANY
BUT HIMSELF.
GREAT FATHER
WAS CHASTISED
BY LONGNESS
AND HUNGER.



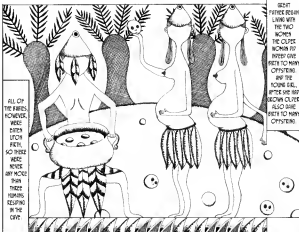
THE WOMEN
NOTICED GREAT
FATHER AND
TOOK FLIGHT.
GREAT FATHER
WENT AFTER
THEM IN PURSUIT,
FOLLOWING
THEM INTO
A CAVE.
THE WOMEN
HAD BEEN
LIVING HERE,
HIDING AWAY
FROM THE
DARKNESS
THAT REIGNS
OUTSIDE.

ONE DAY,
GREAT FATHER
FOUND A PAIR
OF HIDE-LIKE
CREATURES
BATHING IN
THE RIVER,
FILLING OUT
HIS BLOWS.
HE DIDN'T KNOW
AND SAW THAT
THE CREATURES
WERE NO MEN,
BUT TWO
WOMEN.



THE OLDER
WOMAN SAID:
PLEASE MAKE ME
YOUR WIFE.
I SHALL BEAR
MANY CHILDREN
FOR YOU.
MY DAUGHTER IS
TOO YOUNG.
PLEASE GIVE HER
TIME TO MATURE,
AND SHE SHALL
BEAR MANY CHILDREN
FOR YOU ALSO.

WITH NO HOPE
OF ESCAPE,
THE OLDER WOMAN
SAID TO GREAT FATHER:
PLEASE KILL ME
AND EAT ME...
BUT SPARE MY DAUGHTER.
SHE IS YOUNGER,
FOR SHE IS BUT
A YOUNG GIRL.
I WILL NOT EAT YOU.
GREAT FATHER SAID
IN RESPONSE:
I AM VERY LONELY.
I WILL MARRY
YOUR DAUGHTER,
AND THE THREE OF
US SHALL LIVE HERE
TOGETHER.



ALL OF THE WIVES, HOWEVER, WERE BORN WITH BIRTH, SO THERE WERE NONE ANY MORE THAN THREE MEN REMAINING IN THE CAVE.

THEY WERE BORN WITH THE TWO WOMEN. THE OLDEST WOMAN HAD BORN ONE BIRTH TO MANY OFFSPRING. AND THE YOUNG MAN, AFTER HE HAD BORN ONE, ALSO HAD BIRTH TO MANY OFFSPRING.



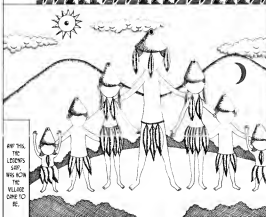
...AND WOULD IN TURN BE BORN BY THEIR OWN OFFSPRING. ONE THEY HAD NAMED AND LADY BORN.

THEY WERE BORN WITH THE TWO WOMEN. THE OLDEST WOMAN HAD BORN ONE BIRTH TO MANY OFFSPRING. AND THE YOUNG MAN, AFTER HE HAD BORN ONE, ALSO HAD BIRTH TO MANY OFFSPRING.

GRANT
FATHER
THEN THEY
FEEDING A
HUMAN CHILD
SADE ENOUGH
THE INSECTS
ACCOMPLISH
INTO A
HUMAN BEING
THE BODY
OF ONE
FEAR HUMAN
BEING COULD
PRODUCE
HUNDREDS OF
GLOWS
OF SOUTHERN
HUMAN MEAT.



GRANT
FATHER
THEY
FEEDING
A FEAR
MONKEY
TO THESE
INSECTS
RASHLY
THE
INSECTS
MOTHER
INTO
MONKEYS
IN A
MATTER
OF
HOURS.



AND THIS
THE
LEADER'S
SAY
WAS NOW
THE
VILLAGE
CAME TO
BE.

GRANT
FATHER'S
DISCOVERY
ENABLED
HIS PEOPLE
TO STOP
EATING
EACH OTHER
THEIR
POPULATION
BEGAN TO
GROW.

FOR IF
DEATH FATHER
HAD TAKEN
THOSE TWO
WOMEN
OR IF HE
HAD NOT
DISCOVERED
THE INSECT
THE VILLAGERS
WOULD NOT
EXIST TODAY



FESTIVAL
BEGIN NOON
THE VILLAGERS
ELVES
TOOK HE
THE VILLAGERS
WERE
PLANNING A
THANKSGIVING
FESTIVAL TO
CELEBRATE
DEATH
FATHER'S
WISDOM AND
TO REMOTE

THE
FATHER
SHEETS
NO
LESS
GROTESQUE
THAN
THE
SCREW
IT
HON-
ORED



HE
WERE
SCOR-
ING
AROUND
THESE
FANCY
KOLU-
TINE
IN THE
VILLAGE
TOLD
DAD-
ING



...THE
ELFES
EN-
LINED
ME-
FULLY.

FEELING OF
THE INSECTS
WE NOT FEELING
SO THIS INSECT
VERY IMPORTANT
FOOD FOR US



NOW MY
I WANT
TO KNOW
THE ANSWER
AS THE
PEOPLE
OF THIS
VILLAGE
SEEMED SO
APPREHENSIVE.

AND THEN
A THOUGHT
OCCURRED TO ME
HOW TO THESE
PEOPLE USUALLY
PROVIDE FOR
THESE INSECTS?
WOULDN'T THERE
BE ENOUGH
PEASANTS IN THIS
VILLAGE TO FEED THEM
ON REGULAR BASIS?
I CONSIDERED ASKING
THE VILLAGE ELVES,
BUT THOUGHT
BETTER OF IT.
SOMEHOW,
I FELT IT WOULD
MAKE HIM EVEN SNIFFERS,
AND I WAS RELUCTANT
TO SEE SOMEONE
BREAK INTO THE
OLD MAN'S GENTLE
FACE.



...WILL
BE EATEN
BY
INSECTS
WHEN
I FEEL
THAT IS
HOW IT
SHOULD
BE.

I TOO-
THE VILLAGE
ELVES
STARTED
TO SAY.

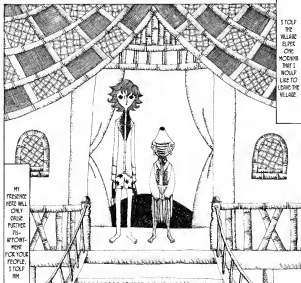


WE
SIMPLY
WATCH
IT,
AS THE
LEGEND

...WAS
JUNG
ACTED
OUT IN
THE
TALL-
AND
CLIMB-
ING.

CHAPTER 5
...
PARADISE LOST





I TOLD
THE
VILLAGE
ELDER
ONE
MORNING
THAT I
WOULD
LIKE TO
LEAVE THE
VILLAGE.

MY
FATHER
HERE WILL
ONLY
GRAB
FURTHER
PO-
WERTOW-
HOW
FOR YOUR
PEOPLE,
I TOLD
HM



YOU CANNOT
DO THAT,
THE VILLAGE
ELDER REPLIED.
WE NOT LET
ANYONE LEAVE
VILLAGE UNIL
THEY ACCEPT
OUR
WELCOME.

HE
WOKE
A SOR-
ROWFUL
EX-
PRESSION
ON HIS
FACE.



TWO
ABLE-
BODIED
MEN...

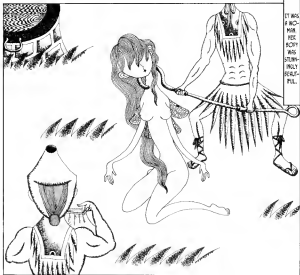


...AND
LOOK-
ED
ME UP
IN A
CAGE.





ONE OF
THE MEN
POCKETED
A HOOK
INTO THE
WELL AND
FILLED
OUT AN
"INVEST".



IT WAS
A WOMAN
HER BODY
WAS
STUNNINGLY
SCULPTURAL.



SHE
WAS
PUT
INTO
THE
SAME
CAGE
AS
MY-
SELF.



THE WOMAN
WOULD TAKE
CARE OF MY
PERSONAL NEEDS
(AND MY SEXUAL
NEEDS AT NIGHT)
FOR A FEW DAYS
AFTER WHICH I
WOULD EAT HER
S-MONTH-OLD
FEMALE INSECTS LIKE
ICE. THAT THE MOST
EXQUISITE MEAT.
ACCORDING TO
THE VILLAGE ELDER.

THIS
FINEST
WAY WE
TOGET
QUEST
THE
VILLAGE
ELDER
SAY.



NOW
COULD I
POSSIBLY
EAT HER
AFTER
ALL THAT?



THE WOMAN FULLY LOOKED UP AFTER HE KEEPS.



I MUST ADMIT WITH SHAME THAT I COULD NOT RESIST THE TEMPTATIONS OF MY ALLURING SON.

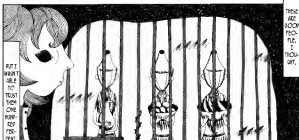


EVERY ONE WAS WORRIED ABOUT ME.

THE DUKE'S SON BROUGHT ME A PEAR MONKEY. HE WAS CONCERNED THAT I HAD BEEN EATING NOTHING BUT POTATOES FOR THE WHOLE DURATION OF MY IMPRISONMENT.



IF YOU NOT EAT MEET SOON THE VILLAGE DUKE WOULD ME THE NEXT BECOME TOWN.



PUT I
WAS
ABLE
TO
TRUST
THEM
ONE
HUNDRED
PERCENT

THESE
ARE
SUCKY
FUCK-
TLES.
I
THOUGHT.



TECHNICALY
THE "MADDOY"
THE VILLAGERS
EAT ARE
ACTUALLY HUMANS,
AND THIS WAS
THEIR WAY OF
PROTECTING
THEMSELVES FROM
RELIVING OTHERWISE
OR FEELING
THEIR RELIEF
THAT IS A JAPANESE.
I WOULD BE MORE
WILLING TO EAT
HUMAN MEAT THAN
INSECT MEAT.

A GLOW
SCULPTURE OF
THE WOMAN'S
BODY
REVEALS
THAT THE WINGS
HAD BEEN
BLIND TO
HER BACK
WITH WOOD
EYES



I
FOUN
HER
TO BE
QUITE
SPOR-
ADIC.

I COULDN'T
BEING MYSELF
TO THINK OF
HER AS AN
"INSECT".
IN FACT,
I HAD BEGUN
TO DEVELOP
EMOTIONS
TOWARDS HER
THAT BORDERED
FEROCIOUSLY
ON FEELINGS
OF LOVE.

SHE WAS
INITIALLY
VERY
RESTRAINED,
BUT
FINALLY
GROGGY
TO THE
PLOT



ONE NIGHT,
USING BODY
LANGUAGE,
I SUGGESTED
TO HER THAT
WE RUN AWAY
FROM THE
VILLAGE.



THEY
WOLF-
OF
VERY
EASILY



I TOOK
FOOD-
ING
THE
PICK.



HOWEVER,
LATER,
SHE
GIVEN
WITH A
SET OF
VARIOUS
TOOLS
-BLU-
BING
AND SLIP.



THE
WOMAN
WROTE
ME TO
BUT
AND RE-
APPEARED
INTO THE
VILLAGE.



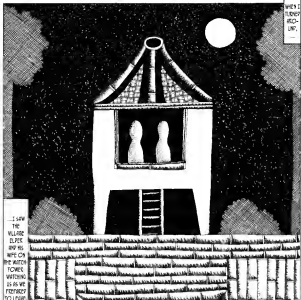
WE WERE
ABLE TO
EIGHT
UNHAPPY-
DR.



NO
ONE
ONE
AFTER
US.



WHEN I
TURNED
AROUND,
—



—I SAW
THE
VILLAGE
ELDER
AND HIS
WIFE ON
THE WATCH
TOWER,
WATCHING
US AS WE
PREPARED
TO LEAVE.



AN
IMMENSE
SENSE
OF GUILT
CRACK-
TOOK
ME.
BUT I
SUDDENLY
FELT VERY
SAFE.



THE
TWO
OF US
ARE
KEEP
ACQUAINT
THE
JUNGLE
REALLY.



WE
LOST
ALL
SENSE
OF
ORIENTA-
TION.



I
FOL-
LOWED
THE
BOY-
MAN.



SHE UN-DARTED OF SOME HALF FLOW-ER.



THE MO-MA SHOT FLOW-ER A MO-MENT WITH HER FLOW-ER.



WE WALK-ED.



AND WE PEAKED WATER AT A SPONGE.



WE ARE.



WE
WALK-
ED
SOME
MORE.



WE
FOR
SOME
BILI-
GITY
THINGS
AT
NIGHT.



AND
WE
LEFT.



WE
WENT
TRY
SOME
WILD
TOYS



THE
HOT
FIRE,
THE
WOMAN
WENT
FOR
A
MOMENT
WITH
HER
BLOWGUN.



WE
WALK
UP.



AND
WE
WENT
WATCH
AT
A
SPRING.



WE
WENT



WE
WALKED
SOME
MORE



WE DID
SOME
BUL-
GITY
THINGS
AT
NIGHT



AND WE
SLEPT...



WE
DREAMED
THEY
SOME
WILD
POTATOES.



THE
FIRE
WITCH
THAT
THE
WOMAN
SHOT
FROM
A
MOMENT
WITH
RECE
BLOWGUN.



WE
WALK-
ED.



AND
THE
FIRE
WITCH
OF
A
STONE.



WE
FTE.



WE
WILDER
SOME
MORE.



WE DID
SOME
MAY-
GHTY
THINGS
AT
NIGHT.



AND WE
SLUTT.

SHE DID
ALL THE
WORK.
FOR ME.
SO I HAD
IT VERY
EASY.



WE WERE
BEEP
THROUG
THE
JUNGLE
FOR
PETS.



AND JUST
AS I WAS
STARTING
TO
WONDER WHY WE
NEVER
REACHED
THE SEA...

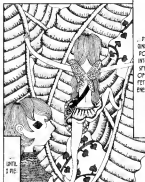
IT DIDN'T
SEEM LIKE
A VERY
LARGE
ISLAND.



...I
NOTICED
SOME
HUMAN
REMAINS
LYING ON
THE GROUND
OF THE
JUNGLE.



SUP-
PENLY, I
STRIVE
TO FEEL
OFFER



FEAR-
ING HE
FORM
INTO A
SPIN
OF RE-
FLECTIV-
NESS...

UNTIL
I FEEL



FEAR-
ING THE
WOMAN
WAS
TAKING
HE
AROUND
IN
CIRCLES...



AND RE-
FLECTIV-
NESS
WAS
SIMPLY
UNACCEP-
TABLE.

I HAD
SET
OUT
ON A
JOUR-
NEY.



I WRAPPED
MY ARMS
AROUND
THE
WOMAN'S
NECK,
AND
STRANGLER
HER.



WE WENT
FORN
WITHOUT
A FIGHT.
IT WAS
LIKE
KILLING
A DEAD
BASTARD.

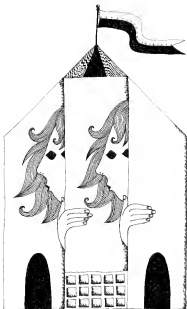
SHE
WAS
DEAD.



BE-
YOND
THE
FIFTH
WAS A
VAST
DES-
ERT.

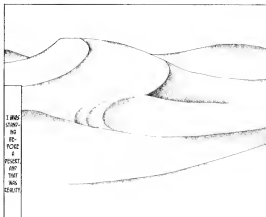


CHAPTER 6 • THE BLIND ARAB



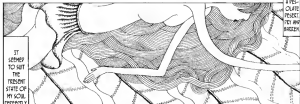


I COULD
TO SET
OUT
INTO
THE
PERFECT.



I WAS
STAND-
ING
BE-
FORE
A
PERFECT
AND
THAT
WAS
CELESTIAL.

I THOUGHT
I WAS ON
A TOOTHAL
ISLAND,
AND IT
SEEMED
OFF THAT
I WOULD
NOW BE
STANDING
BEFORE
A PERFECT.
BUT THAT
MOMENT
SEEMED
IMPORTANT
NOW.



IT
SEEMS
TO HIT
THE
PRESENT
STATE OF
MY SOUL,
TRUSTWORTHY.

A FEL-
LOUSE
PRESENT
FEELING
AND
BAGGED



TRAVEL-
ING
THROUGH
A PRESENT
WOULD
REQUIRE
FOOT
AND,
ABOVE
ALL ELSE,
WHITE.





I TUCK THE WOOLLY HORN OUT IN THE AIR.



I WAS ALWAYS GOOD SKILLED AT SEWING. I DARTER THE SKINS WITH WOOLLY REIN.

... AND MADE A WHITE SKIN FROM HER EYE.

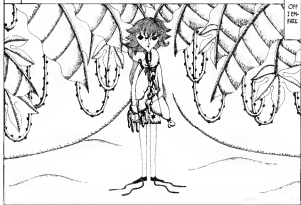


THE TIGA HAVE
ME UNREADY,
BUT I CONVINCED
MYSELF THAT
MY OWN SURVIVAL
NECESSITATED
THIS.

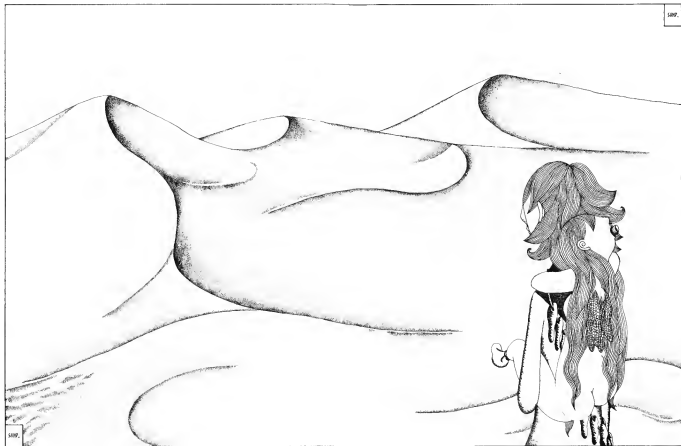


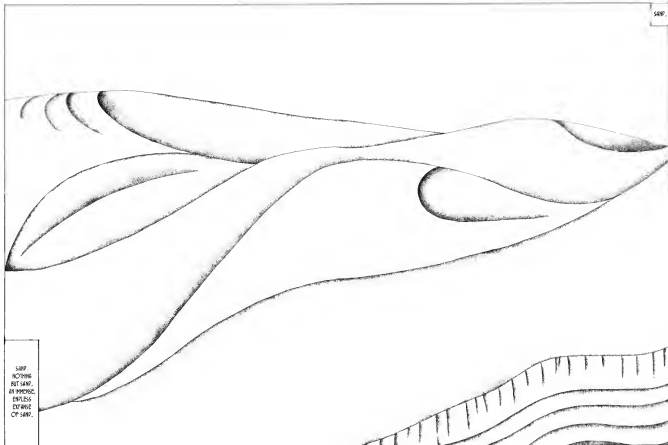
I WAS
ALL
SET TO
GO.

I FILLED
HIS UP
WITH
WATER,
AND
DROPPED
HIS ON
MY BACK.



OFF
I EN-
FILE





SARP.
NOTHING
BUT SARP.
BY PROPOS.
ENDLESS
EXPANSE
OF SARP.



I WAS
THIRSY.

AND
ABOVE
ALL
THE
WHITE
SKIN
WAS
HEAVY.



I FELT
LOW-
ER.

I
LOW-
DER
FOR
COM-
FORT.

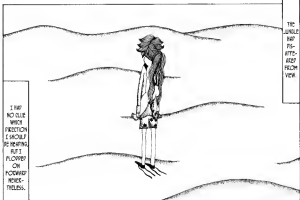


IT FELT
SLIGHTLY
DIFFERENT,
BUT WITH
EVERY
OTHER
GRADE
OF ICE
BORN
BLOND,
I DID NOT
SEE WHAT
ELSE I
COULD
DO.

I HELP
THE WHITE
SKIN IN
FRONT
OF ME
AND FEELS
WHITE
FROM
ITS MOUTH.
IT WAS AS
IF I WERE
LOSING
THE WOMAN.



I
DOES
WALK-
ING
AGAIN.



I HAD
NO CLUE
WHICH
DIRECTION
I SHOULD
BE HEARING
BUT I
FLOWER
ON
POORER
HILLS-
TRELLS.

THE
JUNGLE
HAD
FIS-
HITS-
ACED
FROM
VIEW.



NIGHT
FELL.

THE AIR
GROW
COOLER
ALL
OF A
SU-
DEN.

I HELP
MY
ARM
ACROSS
THE
WATER,
SKIN AS
I WENT
SO
ALONE.

THE
WATER
SEEM
POUNDER
TO BE
WARMER
THAN
THE COOL
AIR, AND
POUNDER
HE WITH
COMFORT.



FOR
THE
NEXT
DAY,
...



...AND
THE DAY
AFTER
THAT,
...

...I
WALKED
ABOUT
THE DESERT
IMPOSSIBLY.



I SOME-
HOW
MANAGED
TO SUSTAIN
MYSELF.
THANKS
TO THE
FOUR MEAT
AND WHITE
SOUL.



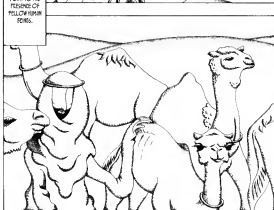


I SPOTTED
A LINE OF
CAMELS FAR
UP AHEAD.



I CAN.

WELL, CAMELS
ONLY EXIST
IN AUSTRALIA.
I WAS NOT
IN AUSTRALIA TO
MY KNOWLEDGE,
SO THE CAMELS
COULD ONLY
POINT TO THE
PRESENCE OF
FELLOW HUMAN
BEINGS.



THE
CAMELS
WERE
BEING LED
BY AN
ADULT MALE.

HE APPEARED
TO BE BLIND
AND SEEMED COMPLETELY
OBVIOUSLY
TO MY PRESENCE.
I SPoke OUT TO HIM,
BUT RECEIVED
NO NOTICABLE
RESPONSE.
I THOUGHT HE MIGHT
BE DEAF AS WELL,
BUT HE DID SEEM TO
RESPOND TO THE
MOVES THAT THE
CAMELS WERE MAKING.

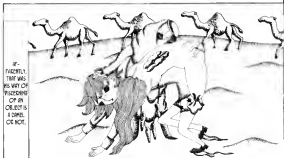
A POSSIBLE
MAN LIVING
ALONE FOR
YEARS IN
THE DESERT
WITH HIS
CAMELS.
I SUSPECTED
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT WAS
POSSIBLE.

I
WATCHED
HIM
ON HIS
SADDLE.

FINALLY,
HE
SEEMED
TO NOTICE
ME.



THE BOAR HAD
STUCK
TOP
FEEL-
ING
MY
BODY.

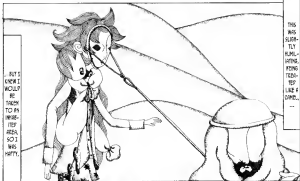


IF-
FACITLY,
THAT WAS
THE WAY OF
TRAVELING
OF AN
CAMEL IS
A CAMEL
OR NOT.

IT
WAS
THAT IF
HIS-
TOON,
THE
WATER
SUN
ON MY
FACE,
FOR A
CAMEL'S
RUN.



THE MAN
TIE A
COPE TO
MY NECK
AND
STARTED
TALKING
ME.



... BUT I
KNEW I
WOULD
BE
TAKEN
TO AN
INTER-
VIEW
AREA, SO I
WAS
HAPPY.

THIS
WAS
SLIGHTLY
HUMIL-
IATING,
BUT
TEAS-
ING
LIKE A
CHILD...



THE SUN
WENT FLOW
AS IT FELL
BEHIND
THE
HORIZON.

I
WILL
THE
MOON
UP
RECK

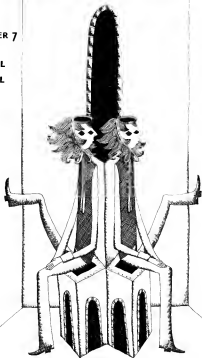


...AS A
DATIVE
CAMEL

CHAPTER 7

• • •

CAMEL
HOTEL





WE
ARRIVED
AT A
LARGE
CITY.

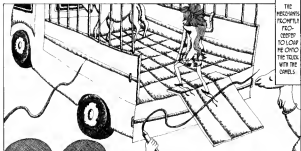


I WENT
SOON AWAY
TO A PLACE
OF JEWISH-
LOOKING
MERCHANTS.

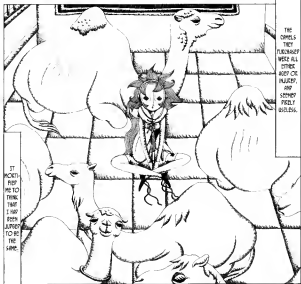


IT
APPEARS
THAT
THE ARAB
COMMUNITY
GREATLY
TRUSTS ON
CAMEL
MILKERS.

I PERFECTLY
FOOTEST THAT
I AM HUMAN.
BUT THIS FALLS
ON MY FACE.



THE PERSONS FROM THE FOOD CENTER FOLLOWED HIM INTO THE TRUCK WITH THE CAMELS.



THE CAMELS THEY PURCHASED WERE ALL OTHERS WHO WERE INJURED, AND SEEMED FEELING BAD.

IT WON'T BE ME TO THINK THAT I HAD BEEN JUMPED TO BE THE SAME.

APPROXIMATELY
THAT IS
WHERE I WILL
BE
WITNESS
TO:



FROM
FRAGMENTS
OF THEIR
CONVERSATION
I COULD
MAKE OUT
THE WORD
"DREAM".

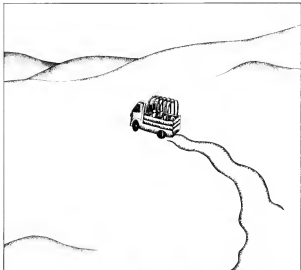
I WAS
CERTAIN
THAT I
WOULD
BE
CONSUMED
BY
POOR



I DREAM
AHEAD.



THE TRUCK
SUSPENSE
CHAINED
ME AS I
TEEMERED
IN PORE.



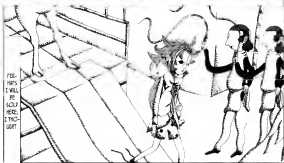
I DO
NOT
KNOW
HOW
FAR WE
TRAVELER,
FARNESS
IN
A DEEP
FULLER.



A
SMALL
LOVE
NEON
SIGN
EMER-
GED
FROM
THE
DESERT
DREAR-
NESS.



WE
HAIKED
AT A
SMALL
HOTEL.



FEB-
HAYS
I WILL
BE
SOUP
HERE,
I THO-
UGHT

THE
CAMELS
AND I
WERE
OFF-
LOA-
PER
FROM
THE
TRUCK.

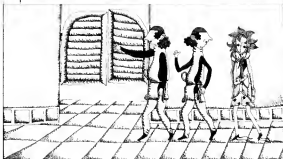


A MAN
DRESSED
IN DRESSY
ATTIRE
TOOK
THE
CARDS
TO THE
BACK OF
THE
BUILDING.



THEY
HAD
BEEN
SLAYED
BY
A THO-
UGHT.

I HEAR
THE
CARDS
COUGH.



PORT-
UN-
TILL
I WAS
ALLO-
WED
IN
FROM
THE
FRONT
ENT-
RANCE.

THE
FLOOR
WAS
OVER-
FLOW-
ING
WITH
MEN
WEAR-
ING
PUSH-
CLOTH-
ING.



IT WAS
A BEST-
PLACED

AN
INCREDIBLY
CREEPY LUMP
REMOVED FROM
THE TABLE.
SHE HAD WITH
HER A FEW
MOMENTS.
EVERY BIT AS
CREEPY AS
ITS MISTRESS.



IT
SEEMED
IMPOSSIBLE
THAT A
CREATURE
WOULD
BEHOLD THIS
CROWD-
GROWING
OTHER-
WISE



THIS
MONKEY
MUST BE
A MIST-
TAKEN,
I THOUGHT.

I WOULD
HAVE
LIKED TO
FEELING, BUT I
CANNOT
SPEAK
THEIR
LANGUAGE.
I FEELING.



THEY
OFF-
CEP
TO
SARGE
THEIR
PONES
WITH
ME.



THE
MEN
FROM
PONG-
ING.



I WAS
LIFTED
INTO A
NEEDY
MOOD.



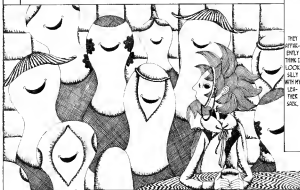
THEY
FROM
SINGING
AND
PONG-
ING
WITH
THE
OTHER
FET-
TIONS.

THE
MEN
WERE
JOVIAL,
AND PONES
WERE
POUNCE
ONE
AFTER
ANOTHER.



LAUGH-
ORICE
SCUFFS.

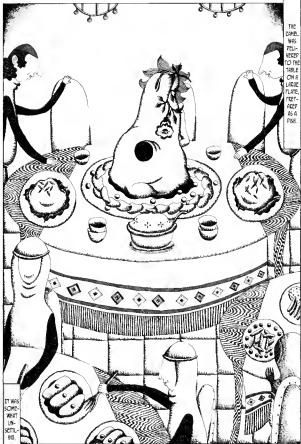
THEY
APPEAR
TO BE
MAKING
JOKE
AT MY
EXPENSE.



THEY
APPARENTLY
THINK I
LOOK
SILLY
WITH MY
LEAF-
TREE
SACK.



I FELT
SLIGHTLY
APPRO-
PRIATE,
BUT I
LAUGHED
ALONG
WITH
THEM.



THE
DAMEL
WAS
PUSHED
TO THE
TABLE
ON A
LARGE
PLATE,
NOT
LESS
AS A
FOOL.

IT WAS
SOME-
WHAT
UN-
USUAL.

THEY
GAVE
ME
THE
MEAT
WITH
THOSE
BARNS
AND
POV-
LOVE
ART.



THE
MEN
MUST
HAVE
BEEN
STUNTED.

...
VAG-
UELY
RESEM-
BLES
THAT
OF A
PERSON
SMIL-
ING.



AN
ORIE-
NTATION
BROADER
MY
MIND
THE
FACE
OF A
PERSON
BEING...

I
MUST
AT
LEAST
STAY
AWAKE
UNTIL
THESE
MEN
FALL
ASLEEP.



I
NEED
TO
GET
A
GRIP
ON
MY-
SELF.
I
THOUGHT.



MY
HEAD
BEGAN
TO
FEEL
PULSE
FROM
THE
PERCE-
PTION.



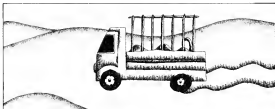
SHEETS ARE HIGH
PLOW BUT I AM
STILL A DAMEL
IN TROUBLE. I
CANNOT LET MY
GUARD DOWN.

THE
FOW-
MILTY THAT
I MAY FIND
MYSELF ON
THE TABLE
TOMORROW
MORNING
COULD NOT BE
KILLED OFF.



I WAS
ENHANCED
TO THE
SCENE.

THAT
RESCUE
SCENARIO
COULD NOT
PREVENT
ME FROM
POORING
OFF.



WHEN I
PAID FOR
THE NEXT
MOVING
THE TRUCK
WAS
ALREADY
PARTIALLY



MY
HEAD
BORED
FROM
THE
BANG
OVER.

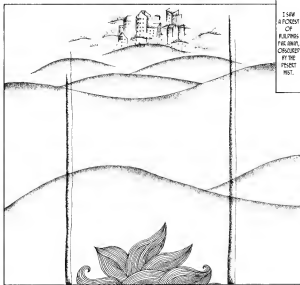


AS I
MIGHT
HAVE
EXPECTED,
I HAD
BEEN
LOADED
ONTO
THE TRUCK,
MY HANDS
AND FEET
BOUND.

WHEN THE
TRUCK PAID
ITS NEXT STOP,
IT WAS AS THE
END OF ME.
THERE WAS
LITTLE'S BODY
FOR OTHER
THAN TENDERS
PROUD FOR
THE INEVITABLE
THE SHILL OF
BORN AND
OWN, FINE
MASSAGED
ME.



I
TONEP
MY
BEAT
OUT
OF
THE
TRICK
TO
TAKE
IN
A
REATH
OF
FRESH
AIR.



I
SAW
A
FOREST
OF
BUILDINGS
THE
SMALL,
CROOKED
BY
THE
FINDING
POST.

THE
FIDUCIOUS-
NESS
OF WHAT
I HAD LEFT
BEHIND
WAS HOME
FOR THE
FIRST TIME



IT WAS
SOULY
KONIC.

I YAGNEY
FOR CIVIL-
IZATION.



I WAS
HELF-
LESS
TO DO
ANY-
THING.



BUT
THAT WAS
BEYOND
MY REACH
NOW

I WAS
TOO
GRIEF-
STRICK-
EN
TO
CRY.



YES-
FINE
OVER-
TOOK
ME.



THE
PAS-
SANGERS
ARE
GETTING
OFF.

THE
TRUCK
CAME
TO A
HALT.



THEY
WANT
ME TO
GET
OFF.



AN
ATTEN-
TION
SEEMS TO
HAVE
BROKEN
OUT
BETWEEN
THEM,
BUT I'M
NOT ABLE
TO UNDER-
STAND
WHAT THEY
ARE SAYING.

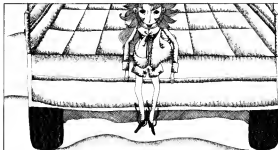


I WAS
FETTERED
WITH
FOUR,
AND
NO
UNDER-
STANDING
LEFT
MY
MOUTH.

THEY
ATTEN-
TION
ME
WITH
KNIVES
IN
THEIR
HANDS.



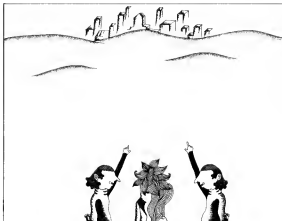
BUT THEY
SIMPLY
SLEW THE
BOY
THAT WAS
ROUND
HE.



"AN
AMERICAN
JOKE"
THEY SAID
IN UNISON
AS THEY
LAUGHED.



THE
"JOKE"
WAS
NOT
STORY
HE WAS
FUNNY.



THEY
CAME
TO THE
CITY.
THEY
SEEM
TO BE
TELLING
ME TO
WALK
TOWARD.

I RE-
SURE
THEY
MUST
HAVE
LEARNED
OF THE
FIREASE
IN THE
PEALING
WITH
JAPANESE
BUSINESS
MEN



"WE RESPECT
FOR JAPAN."
THEY SAY
TO BE IN
GOOD
JAPANESE.

—I
WAS
THANK-
FUL
FOR MY
JAPANESE
FRIENDSHIP.



FOR
THE
FIRST
TIME
IN MY
LIFE

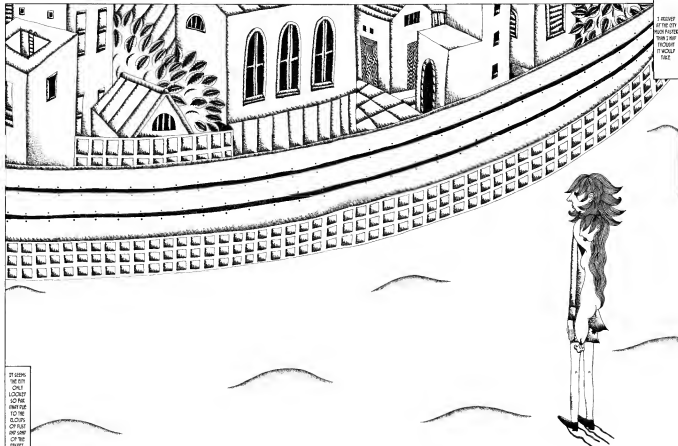
I RAN-
TOSSED
MYSELF
WITH
THE
STEADY-
NESS
OF MY
GAT ...



... AS I
RUSH
TO
WALK
TO-
WARD
THE
OFF.

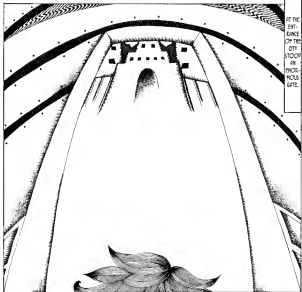
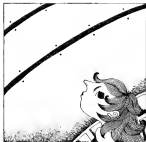


CHAPTER 8
...
THE
GATEKEEPERS



IT SEEMS
THE CITY
ONLY
LOOKS
SO PRE-
SENT
DUE
TO THE
CLUSTERS
OF PLANT
AND ANIMAL
OF THE
FOREST

I REGRET
AT THE CITY
MUCH FASTER
THAN I HAD
THOUGHT
IT WOULD
TAKE



AT THE
ENTRANCE
OF THE
CITY
STOOD
AN
IMMACULATE
GATE.

WIT ON
EACH
SIDE
OF THE
BATES.

... WAS A
RECENT
BATE-
KEEDED
SITTING
ON AN
EQUALLY
RECENT
CLIP
DEAR.



"FOR
YOU
AND
ONLY
YOU
TO
SEE-
ME."



"EVER
SINCE
WE
WERE
YOUNG
WE'VE
BEEN
WRITING
AND
WRIT-
ING".

... SAY
THE
BATE-
KEEDED.



"WE'VE
BEEN
WRITING
HERE
LIKE
SO
FOR
YOU
TO
COME".

...I FELT
MY SENSE
OF THE
BEING
PASTORLEY
AS I
LISTENED
TO THEIR
STRANGE
STORY...



ALTHOUGH
IT WOULDF
NOT HAVE
BEEN THAT
LONG
SINCE I
FIRST LEFT
ON MY
JOURNEY.

THAT IS
ONLY OF
YOUR
DREAMS
AND HAS
NOTHING
TO DO
WITH US.



"I DO
NOT KNOW
SUCH THINGS,"
REPLIED
THE OLD
BARTENDER
IN A SURREPLY
AND CRY
TONE.

I
ASKED



"HOW
LONG
HAVE I
BEEN
TUNNEL-
LING
FOR?"

AND THEY
ANGELLY
REPLIED
BACK AGAIN,
"THE DO
NOT KNOW
OF SUCH
THINGS."



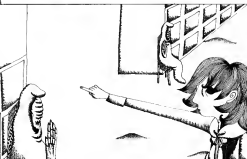
"WHAT,
WHY?"
I ASKED
AGAIN

I FEEL A
LITTLE
UNEASY AT
WHETHER
OR NOT
THEY
WOULD
LET ME
PASS
THROUGH
THE GATES.



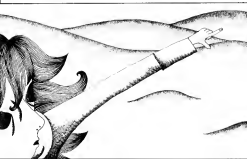
WITH A
FIRE OF
CANNON-
RESCUES
OUT FOR,
I THOUGHT.

"NO",
THEY
ALREADY
REFUSED

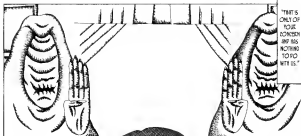


"WHY I
PASS
THROUGH
THESE
GATES?"
I ASKED.

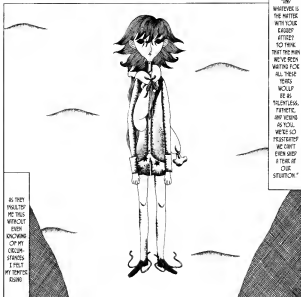
"I MAY BE
CAUGHT
FOR
FOOT
AND SOUL
ALL THE
WAY TO
CHINA."



"WELL,
THAT'S
QUITE
TROUBLE
FOR ME
IF I CAN'T
PASS THESE
GATES.
I'LL HAVE
TO DECIDE
THIS
RESPECT
ALL THE
WAY BACK."



"THAT IS ONLY OF YOUR DIRECTION AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH US."



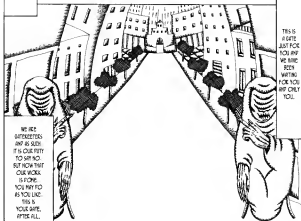
"AND WHATEVER IS THE MATTER WITH YOUR EAGER ATTITUDE TO THINK THAT THE MAN WE'VE BEEN WAITING FOR ALL THESE YEARS WOULD BE AS TALENTLESS, PATHETIC, AND WEIRD AS YOU. WE'RE SO PREOCCUPIED WE CAN'T EVEN SHED A TEAR AT OUR SITUATION!"

AS THEY INSULTED ME THIS WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING OF MY CIRCUMSTANCES I FELT MY TEARS DRYING



"DYE-
EE"

I WAS AT
FLOWER
HOW TO
SEAT TO
THIS SUPPER
TELL FROM
THE GARD-
NEESES.



THIS IS
A DATE
JUST FOR
YOU AND
WE HAVE
BEEN
WAITING
FOR YOU
AND ONLY
YOU.

WE ARE
GARDNEESES
AND AS SUCH
IT IS OUR DUTY
TO SAY NO.
BUT NOW THAT
OUR WORK
IS DONE,
YOU MAY DO
AS YOU LIKE.
THIS IS
YOUR DATE,
AFTER ALL.



"WE DO NOT
KNOW OF
SUCH THINGS"

...THEY
DEFLECT
ANGEL'S
ATTACK



"YOU
THINK
THAT
THESE
ARE
OTHER
BATES?"



BUT AT
THAT INSTANT
THE
GATEKEEPERS
STATED:
"AS SOON
AS YOU
PASS
THROUGH
THESE GATES,
WE SHALL
FORGIVE
IF THAT IS
FINE WITH
YOU
YOU MAY
ENTER."

THEY
OF
SOME
TRY
TO
THEIR
TENTATIVE
I TRY
TO
QUICKLY
MAKE MY
WAY
THROUGH
THE GATES.



I
PASSED
THROU
THE
GATES.

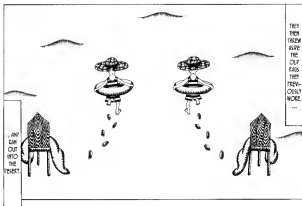
I
HEAVENED
A LITTLE
BUT THEN
REALIZED
THAT I
HAD NO
OBJECTION
TO GIVE
FOR THESE
CANNIBALS
OUT HERE.



STILL,
I FELT
A LITTLE
SADDER
AND SO I
TURNED
AROUND
TO SEE
THEM ONE
LAST TIME.



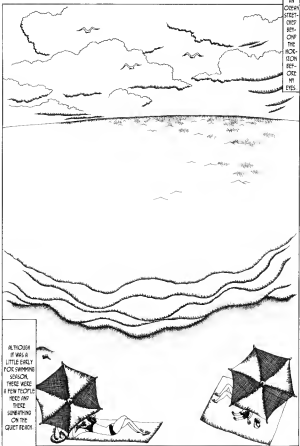
TO MY
SURPRISE,
THE OLD MEN
WHO SEEMED
TO BE TOO
FRAGILE TO
EVEN MOVE
THEIR LEGS
WERE NOT
ONLY STANDING,
BUT ALSO
WEARING STEAM
PATS AS THEY
FLEW ON THEIR
INFLATABLE
SWIM FLOATS.



...AND
CAME
OUT
INTO
THE
DESERT.

THEY
THEN
TOOK
UP
THE
OLD
EARS
THEY
TOOK
ONLY
WORE.
...

AN OCEAN
STRETCHED
BEYOND
THE ROCK-
SUCH REF-
LECTED
IN EYES.



ALTHOUGH
IT WAS A
LITTLE EARLY
FOR SWIMMING
SEASON,
THERE WERE
A FEW PEOPLE
HERE AND
THESE
SUNBATHERS
ON THE
QUIET BEACH.

AS IF TRYING
TO CLEAR UP
ALL THE
SOLDFISH AND
FOURSTATION
THAT HAD BEEN
LEFT UP FROM
WAITING ALL
THESE YEARS,
THEY
PLAYED SO
VIBRACIOUSLY
AND LIVELY.



THE OLD
MEN WERE
NOW
PLAYING
LIKE
CHILDREN
ON THE
BEACH
SANDS.



AL-
MOST
IM-
MENSE-
BLY
SO.



THEY
THEN
WAVED
OUT
TOWARD
THE
OPEN
SEA.

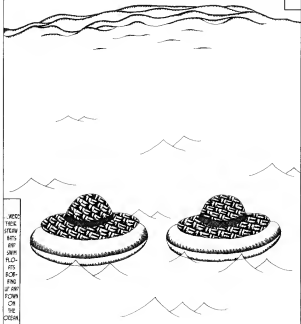


...THEY
PEER-
PEERED
IN THE
MIDDLE
OF THE
SEA.

AND
TOGE-
THER.



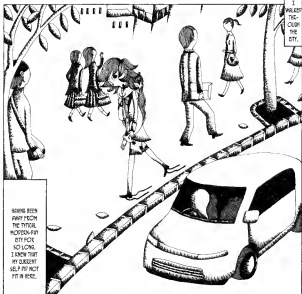
THE
ONLY
TRADES
OF
THEM
LEFT
BEHIND



...WEDD
THESE
STRAW
BATHS
AND
SWIM
FLO-
ATS
BOOM-
ING
UP AND
DOWN
ON
THE
OCEAN

CHAPTER 9 · UNDESIRABLE RETURN,
· UNWELCOME SURVIVAL







FROM
BOREDOM
TO PAY THE
SUGGEST
ATTENTION,
TODAY'S
THAT'S JUST
HOW A CITY
IS.

BUT EVEN
THOUGH
SUCH A
QUERENT
PERSON
AS I WAS
WALKING
BY...



...I
WOULD
HAVE
CHARTERED
THE
SAME
NON-
CHALANT
WHY.

I
GUESS
IF I
WERE
IN
THEIR
SHOES...



I WAS
VERY
TIRED.



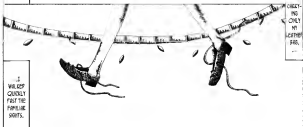
IN ANY
CASE,
I WANTED
TO
TAKE
A REST
SOME-
PLACE.

I KNEW
THAT THERE
WAS NO
PLACE TO
REST FOR
A PERSON
WITHOUT
MONEY.



I HAD
NO
MONEY.

I
WOULD
QUICKLY
FIND THE
FAMILIAR
SMELL.



ONLY
THE
ONLY
MY
LEATHER
SHOES.

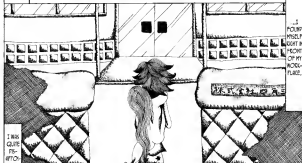


...I FEEL
A LITTLE
UNEASY
AT HOW
FAMILAR
I WAS
FINDING
EVERY-
THING.

AND JUST
WHEN I
THOUGHT
"SOUL
IT BE..."



ALTHOUGH
IT WAS
GOOD
THAT I
FINALLY
FOUND
SOMETHING
I WAS
LOST
IN THIS
CITY.



I WAS
SURE
FINALLY
I HAD
FOUND
IT.

I
FOUND
MYSELF
STANDING
IN FRONT
OF MY
ROOM-
FLAT.



WILL
I REALLY
GO
ON THIS
JOURNEY
ONLY TO
END UP
GOING TO
HELL?

WHAT
KIND
OF END
IS THAT?



AN UNEX-PLAINED AB-SENCE FROM WORK SEEMS TO BE THE CAUSE FOR HIS SHOUT-ING.



MY BOSS WAS TELLING ME HE FROM THE WINDOW ON THE SECOND FLOOR.



IT SEEMS THIS MAN HAS NO USE FOR LISTENING.



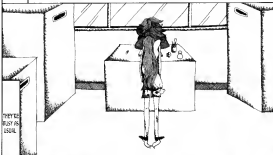
WITHOUT EVEN LISTENING TO WHAT I HAVE TO SAY, HE'S NOW STARTING TO GIVE EVEN ABOUT MY ATTITUDE.

IT SEEMS
THAT HE
HAS NO
USE FOR
SOMEONE
LIKE ME
ANYMORE.



HE LOOKS
A LITTLE
DEJECTED
NOW THAT
HIS LIFE
IS OVER.
HE BEGINS
TO SCRIBBLE
SOMETHING
FOUR.

THEY DO
JUST AS
USUAL.



MY CO-
WORKERS
KEEP ON
WORKING
AS NORMAL,
AS IF TRYING
TO AVOID
MY BARE CO-
ATTENTION.



...THAT
I DON'T
HAVE TO
WORK
HERE
ANYMORE.

I DO-
COME
A LITTLE
BITTY,



THERE'S
A YOUNG
FIRM
I DON'T
RECOGNISE
SITTING IN
MYSEAT.



MY FOSTER
SIBEL ME
A STABLE
OF FOOD-
MENTS
AND
OFFERS
ME TO
GO TO
THE LOCAL
GOVERN-
MENT
OFFICES.



FINDING
MY
QUESTIONS
TOO
POOR-
SOME
TO
ANSWER.

THE
POINTS
ARE
NONE
TO-
WARDS
THE
EXIT.



"OH
NOW
OFFICI-
ALLY
FREE,
RIGHT?"



ALTHOUGH
I HAVE
NO
ATTACH-
MENTS
TO
THIS
CITY.
I
STILL
WANT
FOR
I
NEED
MONEY
AT
THE
VERY
LEAST.

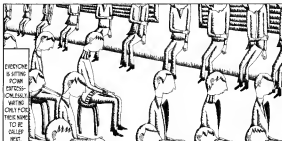


...AND
SMILED
TO THE
WAITING
ROOM.



I PRE-
SENT
MY
FORMS
TO THE
CLERK
AT THE
UNEM-
PLOYMENT
OFFICE.

SIGN LEAFS - UNEMPLOYMENT OFFICE



EVERYONE
IS SITTING
DOWN
DISPENS-
IONLESSLY
WAITING
ONLY FOR
THEIR NAME
TO BE
CALLED
NEXT.

THE
WAITING
ROOM
WAS SO
TACKLED
THAT
THERE
WAS
NOT
EVEN A
PLACE
TO SIT
DOWN.



BUT OF
COURSE
I'M THE
ONLY
ONE HERE
SUFFERING
A LITTLE
BIT ON HIS
SHOULD-
ERS.

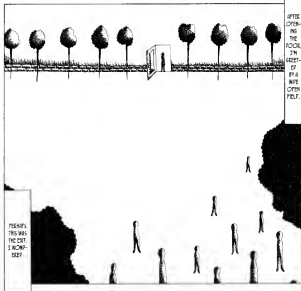
I WONDER
WHAT
SORT OF
TROUBLES
EACH
PERSON
HERE IS
GOING
ON THESE
SHOULD-
ERS.



AS IF TRYING TO FINISH HIS JOB AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE, THE OFFICIAL FORCE-FULLY SHOVES HIM BACK THROUGH THE DOOR.

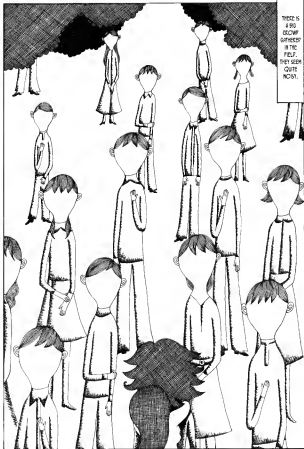


I WONDER HOW MANY TIMES I'VE BEEN WRITING POETRY IT'S ALREADY CLOSE TO NIGHT BY THE TIME MY NAME IS CALLED?

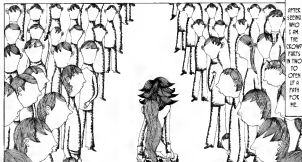


AFTER OPENING THE DOOR, I'M GREETED BY A WIFE OF MY FIELD.

PERHAPS THIS WAS THE ONLY I WOULD SEE?



THERE IS
A BIG
GATHERING
IN THE
FIELD. THEY SEEM
QUITE
HAPPY.



AFTER SEEING WHO I AM, THE CROWD PARTS IN TWO TO OPEN UP A PATH FOR ME.

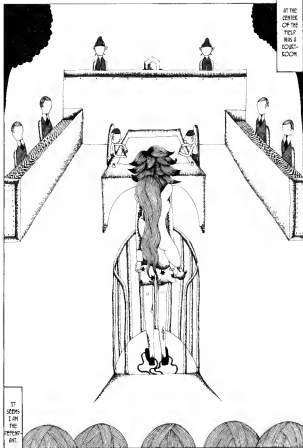


I STAGGERE FORWARD ON THIS ROW AMONG THE THROGS OF PEOPLE.

LIKE A TREE MADE-TO-GROW UNDER...



AT THE
CENTER
OF THE
FIELD
WAS A
BOOTH.



IT
SEEMS
I AM
THE
POTENTIAL.



I KNOW WHAT THE OUTCOME WOULD BE GOTT FROM THE STREET, I WOULD BE.

FOR SOME REASON, I THOUGHT IT WAS ONLY NATURAL, FOR ME TO BE THE CENTER OF THE TOWN, SINCE THE CITY BATES WERE OFFENSE JUST FOR ME.



THE TREADING JUDGE SEEMED TO BE SO SHORT THAT I COULD ONLY SEE HIS HANES.

THREE JUDGES SET BEFORE ME.



I RESISTED SLIGHTLY BUT IT WAS ULTIMATELY FUTILE.

MY LEATHER BAG WAS TAKEN AWAY FROM ME AS EVIDENCE.



I AM
DROPPING
FOR THE
HUEPUE
OF THE
WOMAN
AND EATING
HIS FLESH.

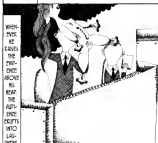


BUT I AM
NO INTENTION
OF ISSUING
BACK ON
THIS POINT.
I ONLY
WANTED TO
REMAIN FIRM
IN MY LAST
MOMENTS.

I REAL-
IZED
HOW
ARREST
MY
OWN
WORDS
SOUND-
ING.



"THE THING
I COLLECT
WAS ONLY
AN IDEAL,
NOT A
HUMAN."



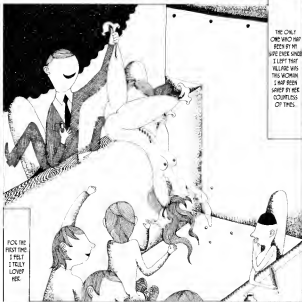
WHEN-
EVER
HE
CRAVES
THE
EVIDENCE
BEHIND
HIS
HEAD, THE
AUDIENCE
COLLAPSES
INTO LAUGHS.



THE
PRO-
SECU-
TOR
IS
GIVING
A
POSS-
IBLE
SPEECH.



I FELT
FOUL-
EATED.



THE ONLY
ONE WHO HAD
BEEN BY MY
SIDE SINCE
I LEFT THAT
VILLAGE WAS
THIS WOMAN.
I HAD BEEN
WARY BY HER
COUNTLESS
OF TIMES.

FOR THE
FIRST TIME,
I FELT
I TRULY
LOVED
HER.

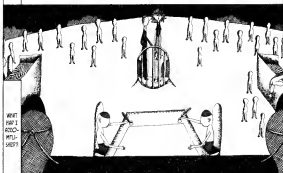
"WELL IF YOU HAVE NO RETURN? IF YOU ONLY HAVNT COME BACK, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN CAUGHT IN THIS SITUATION."

MY LAWYER IS TELLING AT MY BARS.



AS MY BREATH WAS GETTING ON MY NECKES.

WELL, THERE'S NO USE IN TELLING ME THAT NOW, I THOUGHT, I WISHED HE WOULDF AT LEAST TALK IN A SOFTENED VOICE.



WHAT WAS I ACCOMPLISHING?

MY JOURNEY WAS CONTINUING UP TO THE FOUNTAIN.

HAVING UNDERSTOOD
WHAT THE
OUTCOME OF
THIS TRIAL
WOULD BE,
I HAD NO
INTEREST IN
THE LAWLESS
PEASANTS.
I ONLY WISHED
TO HAVE MY
LEATHER BAG BACK,
THAT WAS THE
ONLY THOUGHT
BURNING IN
MY MIND.

HOW-
EVER,
I COULD
NOT
UNDER-
STAND
THESE
WORDS,
WHICH
SOUNDED
AS STRANGE
TO ME AS
A FOREIGN
LANGUAGE.

...I
ATTENDED
IN A
SILENT
VOICE.

"I
HAVE
NO
INTEN-
TION
OF
HOLDING
BACK."

I JUST
WANTED
THIS
TRIAL
TO BE
OVER
AL-
READY.



THE
FOOL-
LE
BRO-
UGHT
FOORTH
AN OUP
POM-
KEY.



THEY
SAT ME
ON THE
POMKEY,
WHICH
LED ME
BENEATH
A LARGE
TREE.



I PUT
THE
NOOSE
AROUND
MY
OWN
NECK.



ONE
BROKE
ME UP
I HAD
MY
LAST
WISHES.

THE
THIRD
JUMPED
UP
INTO
FRESH
CLOTH-
ING.



I WAS
GLAD TO
WOLF HER
BACK IN
MY HANDS
AGAIN.

"I WASH
MY
LIMBS
SAC."

...AND
TWO.
I HAD
MY
LAST
WORDS.
OK,
NOT.



THE
OTHER
FOUR
SAID
ME,



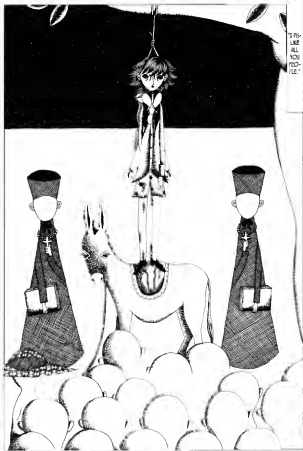
...AND
FOR-
GIV-
ING
MY
TWO-
BITS, I SAID

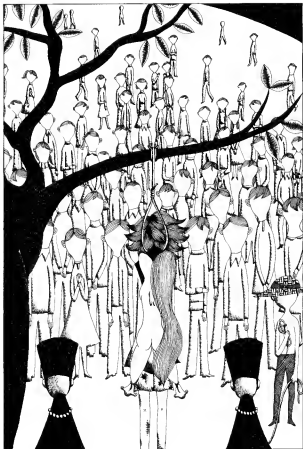


AFTER
THINK-
ING A
LITTLE.



"I FIG-
URE
ALL
YOUR
PEO-
PLE."








**"THAT
IS
YOUR
COP."**



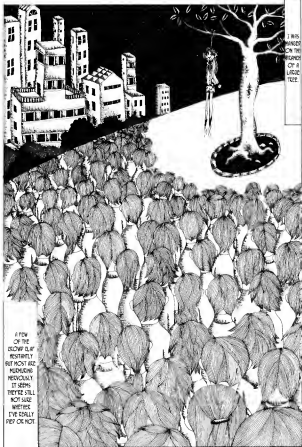
THE
PO-
KE-
RS
WHI-
TER,
and



...AND
I WAS
THEN
PREG-
NANT.

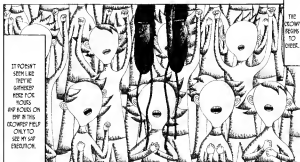
CHAPTER 10 • THE END OF THE WORLD





I WAS
HANGING
ON THE
BRANCH
OF A
LARGE
TREE.

A FEW
OF THE
DISCIPLES
CLIMB
RESTLESSLY
BUT MOST ARE
NODDING
NEEDLESSLY
IT SEEMS
THEY'RE STILL
NOT SURE
WHETHER
I'VE REALLY
DIED OR NOT.



IT DOESN'T
SEEM LIKE
THEY'RE
GATHERED
HERE FOR
HOURS
AND HOURS ON
THE IRIS
FLOWER FIELD
ONLY TO
SEE MY SISTER.

THE
CROWD
SEEMS
TO
GROW.



A DOOR
LOOKING
LARGE
TAKES
DOWN
THE
BOY
FROM
THE
TIDE

THEY'RE
NOW
FEASTING
UPON THE
BITS AND
PIECES OF
MY FLESH.
I SEE
SO THEY
WERE JUST
HUNGRY.



WITHIN
AN INSTANT
THE GLOWP
SWIRLS
OVER MY
BODY AND
TEARS IT
INTO
PIECES.

...AND
LIKE A
WORTH-
LESS
PIECE
OF
TRASH,
I AM
NO
MORE.



MY BODY
IS TAKEN
INTO THEIR
STRONGS.

THEY NO
LONGER
FORGIVE
TO EVEN
HOLD AN
ACTUAL
TOOL.



THE
GLOWP IS
CAUGHT
UP IN A
PECKISH
PERVOUE
NEW
NOTING
ARE
CHOSEN.



...AND
PROXY-
ONE IS A
WITCH.



EVERY-
ONE IS A
WITCH.



ONCE
EIGHTY





THE
MASS OF PEOPLE
LOOKS
LIKE A
GIANT
PUZZLE
ITSELF.

PEOPLE
HERE AND
THERE ARE
ALL THING
KILLER
AND DE-
VOUSEY

SITTING ON
THE TOP
OF A TALL
BUILDING.
I GAZE AT
THE SCENE
BELOW
ME.

THESE
WILL MOST
LIKELY BE
NO END TO
THIS
HAPPINESS
UNTIL
ONLY ONE
PERSON
IS LEFT
HAPPY.

I HAD
STARTED
THIS
JOURNEY
AND AS
SURE
I MUST SEE
THROUGH
IT UNTIL
THE END.



THIS IS ALL
MY FAULT.
I THOUGHT,
HOWEVER,
I HAD NO
THING OF
GUILT.

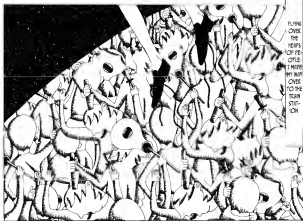


LET'S
GO BACK
TO THE
HOME.
I WAS SO
SICK AND
Tired OF

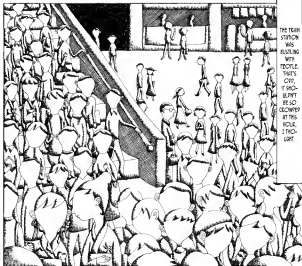
AND
WHEN I
THOUGHT,
I COULD
ONLY
FLY.



FOR
SOME
REASON,
I FELT
THAT I
COULD
FLY.



FLYING
OVER
THE
HEADS
OF
PEO-
PLE,
I
WENT
BY
WAY
OVER
TO
THE
TRAIN
STATION



THE TRAIN
STATION
WAS
FESTERING
WITH
PEOPLE.
THAT'S
O.K.,
IT SHOULDN'T
BE SO
CROWDED
AT THIS
HOUR,
I THOUGHT.



PERHAPS
THERE
WAS A
PREDICIOUS
FESTIVAL
TONIGHT.



I THOUGHT
OF TAKING
THE TRAIN
BACK HOME
BUT THEN
REALIZED
I HAD NO
MONEY.
AND SO I
DECIDED
TO WALK
HOME.



...IT
SEEMS
UNUSUALLY
QUIET.



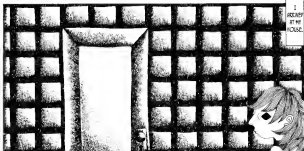
AFTER
LEAVING
THE
NOON
HUSTLE
AND
HUSTLE



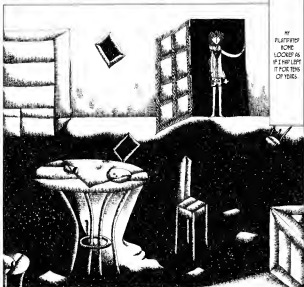
NOT A
SINGLE
LIGHT
WAS
FIXED ON
IN ANY
HOUSE.
ONLY THE
STREET-
LIGHTS
MARKED
THE WAY
FOR ME.



I WALKED
THROUGH
THIS
FESQUATE
NEIGH-
BOUR-
HOOD
CARRYING
MY
LEATHER
BAG ON
MY BACK.



I
HIDDER
AT MY
HOUSE.



MY
FLATFIRE
BOMB
LOCKED AS
IF I HAD LEFT
IT FOR YEARS.



I LIEP
DOWN ON MY
BED.

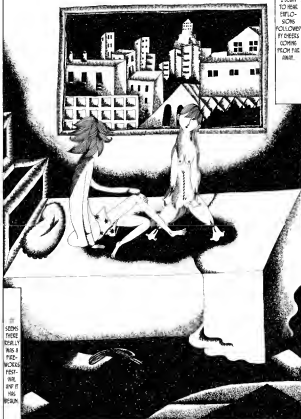


THE FETTER
UNFEE-
BATE
MY BACK
WAS
COUPLING
AWAY LIKE
BITS OF
SHIP.



I WAS
TICKY
TICKY.

I BOON
TO HEAR
EXPLO-
SIONS
FOLLOWED
BY DEERS
COMING
FROM THE
WIND.



IT
SEEMS
THERE
WAS A
FIRE-
WORKS
FESTI-
VAL, AND IT
WAS
WILD.



I COULD
KEEP
MY
DREAMS.



I
WANT
TO
SLEEP.



...AND
DUM-
DIP
INSIDE
OF IT.



I BUT
OPEN
THE CO-
CHACH
OF MY
LOA-
TREC
BAG,
...



IT WAS
FLERS-
RITLY
DOOL
INSIDE
THE
BODY
DIP
HARE
HE
FOOL
COLA-
DIP.



THE
JOHNNY
WAS ONCE
IT WAS A
PLEASANT
FEELING.

IT WAS
VERY
QUIET.

AND
THUS,

—

LET
SET
THE
OUR-
TIPS
ON MY
WORLD



EPILOGUE

• • •

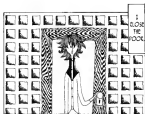
THE END
THAT
DOESN'T
END

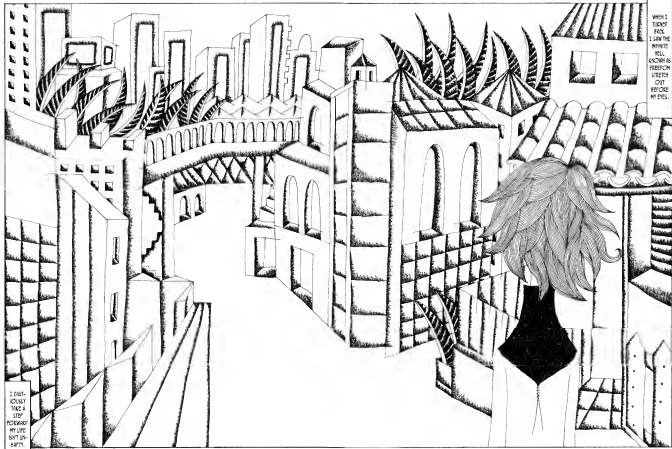
I
WOKED
UP
ONE
MORN-
ING.

I WAS BLINDLY
RARED IN MY
CONSCIOUSNESS
THAT I WOKED UP
THAT MORNINE.
IT WAS THE FIRST
TIME THAT THIS
EYES BATTENED
IT FRIGHTENED
ME.

I PROMPT TO
GO TO WORK
I TRY TO
BE MY
SACRILAGES,
ONLY TO
REALIZE I
WONT KNOW
HOW TO BE
TREN MY-
MORE.

MY
DROCTIONS
AND MY
SACRILAGES
BECOME ALL
TANBLE UP.





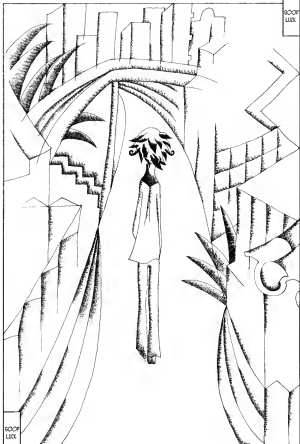
WHEN I
TURNED
BACK,
I SAW THE
INFINITE
HELL
KNOWN AS
FREEDOM
STRETCH
OUT
BEFORE
MY EYES.

I DIDN'T
KNOW I
TOOK A
STEP
FORWARD;
MY LIFE
WENT ON.
EIGHTY.

BOON
LICK.



BOON
LICK.



BOOF
LUDG.



BOOF
LUDG.

WOOD
LURE



WOOD
LURE

「この世の終りへの旅」に終りはあるのか？

中条省平 早稲田大学助産学・フランス文学

■ ■ ■ ■ ■ ■

すぐれた芸術家は同じモチーフを繰り返かえす。同じモチーフを繰り返かえすからすぐれているのではない。いくら同じモチーフを繰り返かえしても、そこに浸めども尽きぬ創作の泉を発見することができるからすごいのである。

西国兄妹もそうしたすぐれた芸術家だ。

たとえば、初長篇『この世の終りへの旅』の冒頭。主人公は、ある朝、目を覚まして、なにかが変わっているという重い異和感におそわれる。

この、朝の目覚めとそれにつづく異和感というモチーフは、西国兄妹のデビュー作「僕が殺したものの」にすでに語られているし、「殺人鬼Pの呪い」でも繰り返かえされている（ともに『ぼく虫』収録）。また、西国兄妹のもっとも完成度の高い作品のひとつである『地獄』も、同じような始まりかたをしている（『地獄』収録）。『地獄』には、主人公が目を覚ますところは描かれていないが、

彼が白室から階下の食堂に降りてゆき、家族のみんなに「おはようございます」と挨拶をしているから、この物語がやはり朝の日覚めから始まっていたことがわかる仕掛けなのである。

ある朝、目覚めると、一匹の巨大な毒虫になっていたのは、カフカの『変身』の主人公だが、おそらく西岡兄妹もカフカが大好きなのだろう。「この世の終りへの旅」にも、『審判』や『旋の門』をもじった場面が登場している。

だが、西岡兄妹の主人公たちが朝起きて感じる異和感とは、けっしてカフカの影響などには還元できない。それは、自分というものを永久不変の存在と身えて疑わない人間の意識と、その意識の耐えがたい脆弱さやお気楽さにたいする根本的な異議申し立てなのである。そして、世界文学のなかで初めてそのことを明確にしめたのが、カフカという男だった。

『変身』のグレゴール・ザムザは虫になってしまったが、「この世の終りへの旅」の「ぼく」は、靴の性の結びかたが分からなくなってしまう。物語の最初から最後まではどけたままの靴の紐は、自分というもののもろさに気づいた「ぼく」の意識の異和感を表現するメタファーなのだろう。もっとも、ラスト近くで家にたどり着いた「ぼく」は、その靴をぬいで裸足になり、女の事後にもぐりこんで、「ぼくの世界の全てを聞きし」、ついに安楽を得るのだが、エピソードでは、ふたたび紐のはどけた靴をはいて、旅に出なければならなくなる。

一度、自分の異物性に気づいた人間には、安んじた暮らしは許されず、たえず放浪することが運命づけられる。思えば、西岡兄妹のマンガの主人公は、みんなそうした放浪者だった。

西岡兄妹の書く主人公たちは、放浪者だから、よく家を出る。よく海辺に行く。よく船に乗る。「この世の終りへの旅」の「ぼく」も例外ではなく、そうして、今回は海賊船の船長になる。「この世の終りへの旅」のいくつものエピソードのなかで、この海賊船の話を、私はいちばん好ましく思

う。お伽話の冒険のように無責任で、どこかユーモラスだからである。

だが、この明るいメルヘンのような調子は長つづきしない。海賊船が沈没して、「ぼく」が漂着する島の物語からあとは、カニバリズムが重要な主題になるからだ。

この島に住む部族が、人間そっくりの虫を食糧にしているというだけの話ではない。「ぼく」もまた、この虫がじつは本物の人間ではないかという疑いを抱きながら、自分の愛する人間そっくりの女を殺し、その肉を干し肉にして食べてしまうのである。さらには、「ぼく」自身がラクダと間違えられて食べられそうになったあげく、人間全体がたがいに関しあひ、たがいを食ひ喰つてゐるところを「ぼく」は目撃する。

おそらく、西岡兄妹の目には、たがいに愛してしなく殺しあつてゐる人間は、自分で自分を食ひ喰う怪物のように見えるのだろう。

だが、フロイトがいったように、カニバリズムには、破壊的情事とはまったく是に、愛情や畏敬の対象と同一化したいというもうひとつの側面がある。「この世の終りへの旅」の「ぼく」が、愛する女を殺し、その肉を食べ、殺した女の革袋を肌身はなす持ち歩くようになるのは、カニバリズムのそのもうひとつの側面のあらわれなのだろう。「ぼく」は最後には、女の革袋の腹をもう一層開き、そのなかにもぐりこむ。つまり、今度は「ぼく」のほうに女が食べられて、女の腹に収まることになるのだ。そうして、人間が生まれてくる瞬間にかならず失つてしまう母と胎児の同一という至福の時を回復するのである。

そういえば、さきほど例にだしたデビュー作「僕が殺したものと」、「殺人鬼Pの呪い」にも、人間のお腹を裂くと、そこにもうひとつの人間がいるという薄気味悪いモチーフがあらわれていた。だが、それはたんなるグロテスクな表現嗜好や猟奇趣味ではない。むしろ、そうしたモチーフには、

自分が母親のお腹を割って生まれてきたという神秘にたいして結果がよせるような、純粋でむきだし的好奇心が感じられる。別の作品「誕生日」（はく虫）収録）には、子供が母親を懐胎するという物語が描かれていることもつけ加えておこう。

また、『この世の終りへの旅』の原型ともいうべき傑作短編「悲しい恋の話」（『心の悲しみ』収録）では、主人公が死んだ女といっしょに棺桶におさまるのだが、このエピソードなども、『この世の終りへの旅』の「ばく」が女の革袋に入りこむ話によく似ているだけでなく、子供が母の胎内で母と一体化するというモチーフの要素であるように思われる。

しかし、母の胎内への回帰はひと時の夢にすぎない。先にも述べたように、西岡兄妹の主人公はふたたび紐のほどけた靴をはいて、『この世の終りへの旅』のなかで、「終らない終り」を探し求めて放浪しなければならないのである。



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